

Syria may attack — Israeli general

TEL AVIV (AP) — Syria might attack Israel if it concludes there is no peaceful way to regain the Golan Heights, a top Israeli intelligence official reportedly told lawmakers Tuesday. Brigadier General Amos Gilad, head of research at military intelligence, told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee that "the Syrians are talking about a military option, are preparing for it, and it will be implemented in accordance with developments." Israel's Channel 2 TV said, "If we reach a dead end in the diplomatic process (Syrian President Hafez Al) Assad's conclusion will be to use a military move while exploiting the element of surprise for a diplomatic gain," he was quoted as saying. Syria alarmed Israel last month by moving troops in Lebanon and increasing its military presence near the Golan.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية الراي.

King meets Algerian notable

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday received the visiting leader of the Algerian Islamic Society Movement (AISMI), Sheikh Mahfouz Nihnah, and discussed with him issues of common concern to the Islamic Nation. Sheikh Nihnah lauded Jordan's democratic achievements, saying that political pluralism and respect for human rights in the Kingdom had set an example for other Arab countries. The audience was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh. In a statement to Petra, Sheikh Nihnah also paid tribute to Jordan's democratic experience and called for fostering and supporting democratic experiences in Arab countries. He lauded the Jordanian Islamic movement, describing it as moderate and committed to the principles of national unity. He said his visit to Jordan was aimed at enhancing ties between the eastern and western flanks of the Arab World.

Volume 21 Number 6353

AMMAN WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, JUMADA II, 3, 1417

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

King Hussein pays landmark visit to Jericho in emphatic expression of support for Palestinians

HM reiterates pledge to do everything possible to help Palestinians succeed in their struggle for their rights 'Jordanian-Palestinian cause is one and Jordanian-Palestinian unity is sacred'

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

JERICHO — In what was described as an emphatic expression of support for the Palestinians and efforts to salvage the troubled peace process, His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday paid a short visit to the Palestinian city of Jericho, becoming the first Arab head of state to visit the self-rule areas.

The apparent happiness of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and the hundreds of people who cheered the King upon arrival in this sleepy city in the Jordan Valley reflected the significance of the visit for the Palestinian people and leadership, who expressed appreciation for the King's support for them in their stalemated talks with the Israelis.

"We will sacrifice our blood and spirit for you King Hussein," chanted Palestinians who stood on the streets and rooftops to greet the King.

The King, who flew the helicopter which took him and Mr. Arafat to Jericho, told Mr. Arafat and the Palestinian people during a joint press conference that "we will be with you to the best of our ability under all conditions and in the face of all challenges."

"Our cause is one," he said. The unity of the Palestinian and Jordanian people is "sacred," he said.

Talking to journalists, who crowded the hall in which the press conference was held at the Presidential Building, the King said he will do all he can to help the Palestinians regain their rights and the peace process overcome the obstacles it is

Kabariti visits Cairo today with message for Mubarak

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti will visit Cairo today (Wednesday) to deliver a message from His Majesty King Hussein to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The message is believed to be deal with the latest developments in the peace process and the outcome of the King's efforts to remove the hurdles in the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations.

Mr. Kabariti on Tuesday briefed the Cabinet of the King's visit to Jericho earlier in the day and the talks he held with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross.

(The Qatari News Agency quoted Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai as saying that he had sent his senior aide David Afri to Jordan last week to discuss several security and military issues of common concern. The report could not be confirmed independently).

Reports said meanwhile Mr. Arafat was also scheduled to visit Cairo today to brief Mr. Mubarak on the latest developments in the peace process.

Arafat and talking with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross on the phone. Mr. Ross later flew to Amman and met with the King and Mr. Arafat.

There were reports that Mr. Netanyahu was going to join the King and Mr. Arafat in a three-way summit yesterday, but the King said that the summit was not on the cards but it was "not practical."

Commenting on a report that a four-way summit grouping the King, Mr. Arafat, Mr. Netanyahu and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Amman once the conflict over Hebron was resolved, Mr. Khasawneh said that it was natural a meeting would take place to put the peace process back on track once the issue of Hebron and Palestinian women prisoners were resolved.

But he said there is no agreement on the summit or its venue yet and the meeting is still just an idea for discussion.

"We hope that what is happening now (in terms of difficulties facing the peace process) is the exception to the rule," Mr. Khasawneh told the Jordan Times.

In Jericho, the King, who said he was overwhelmed by the warm welcome he was accorded, stressed that he will continue to do all he can to help realise the goal of comprehensive and just peace in the region.

Apart from a confirmation by Mr. Arafat that he proposed to the Israelis that U.S. soldiers patrol the city of Hebron to meet Israeli demands for ensuring the security of about 400 settlers who live in the city,



His Majesty King Hussein with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in Jericho on Tuesday (Photo by Yousef Allan)

nothing new was announced in the press conference.

Mr. Netanyahu was quoted as saying that the proposal is a non-starter and the U.S. said the idea was not "under active consideration."

Mr. Arafat insisted that no breakthroughs were achieved in the talks the Palestinians and the Israelis started after the Washington summit Oct. 1/2.

"Unfortunately, the same position and demands are repeated every day. We are not asking for the impossible. We are asking (for the implementation) of what has been agreed on... we want it to be implemented on the ground," said Mr. Arafat.

King Hussein reiterated that the only way to overcome the crisis facing the peace talks was to implement all the agreements that had been reached between the Palestinians and the Israelis.

The King said that his warnings to the Israeli prime minister during the Washington summit that his policies were pushing the region towards the brink of an abyss stemmed from his concern for the peace process and the well-being of the people of the area, including the Israelis.

"When we felt that there was a delay in implementing agreements and the situation exploded, it was inevitable that we point to the danger and address all in this area, especially the Israelis," the King told the press conference.

The King said he will pursue all possible means and do all "that is possible

to salvage the peace process which...has enemies here and there who represent the minority in terms of the will of all to achieve just peace for the benefit of future generations.

"We urge everybody to do the impossible so that the enemies of peace, who put obstacles in the face of the peace process and exploded the situation, do not win and deny us the peace which we want for the Palestinian people, Jordan, the Arabs and the Israelis," said the King.

The King, whose criticism of Israel caused a crisis in Jordanian-Israeli relations, said that Jordan had wanted its ties with Israel to be part of a series of steps aimed at achieving comprehensive and just peace and hence are his

warnings that the peace process should not be allowed to fail.

Mr. Khasawneh said that the relations with Israel, which took a legal form through the peace treaty, cannot be isolated from the goal of comprehensive peace in the area.

"We have an interest in the achievement of comprehensive peace," he said.

The King said his criticism were dictated by "logic" after the peace process was put in jeopardy and were not a matter of pressure on Israel.

But the King said that Jordan had made its position clear and was still awaiting the "pleasant" surprise which Mr. Netanyahu promised him at the Washington summit.

"We haven't seen that surprise yet," said the King, who urged the implementation of all agreements reached between the Palestinians and the Israelis for the sake of pushing the peace process forward.

During their talks, the King and Mr. Arafat stressed the need for achieving progress on the Palestinian track and commitment to the agreements that have been made.

Mr. Arafat echoed the King in stressing that peace must be comprehensive and reached on the Syrian and Lebanese fronts.

The King said all channels remain open and his contacts will continue with all concerned to ensure the peace process is put back on track and that the Palestinian-Israeli talks, which are taking place with close American involvement,

(Continued on page 7)

U.S., Israel reject Arafat's call for American troops in Hebron

Resumption of talks delayed by one day again

JERICHO (Agencies) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat called Tuesday for the deployment of an international peacekeeping force with U.S. participation in Hebron to ease Israeli security concerns over redeployment from the volatile West Bank city.

But the United States and Israel rejected the suggestion.

"That issue has been raised in the past and is not under consideration," said White House spokesman Michael McCurry, in New Mexico with President Bill Clinton.

Earlier Tuesday U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said the matter was "not under active consideration."

Israel said Mr. Arafat's proposal was an attempt to "create a mini-crisis" and force last-minute concessions from Israel as intensive negotiations on Hebron continue.

Speaking at a joint news conference in Jericho with King Hussein, Mr. Arafat said he told the Israelis: "If you don't trust your soldiers and our soldiers, why not call upon the international presence with the participation of the

American army?"

Mr. Arafat referred to the use of U.S. soldiers who patrolled the Sinai Peninsula as part of the 1979 Egypt-Israeli peace accord and proposals for a similar force in the Golan Heights, adding: "Why not in Hebron?"

The Israeli side has repeatedly been asking for security, security, security," he said. This force "would close constant claims over security."

But a spokesman for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ruled out the dispatch of an armed international force to Hebron as a substitute for guarantees being demanded by Israel to improve security for 400 Jewish settlers living among 120,000 Palestinians in the city.

"To suggest the possibility of bringing in a foreign army is to make a mockery of the peace agreements and is a non-starter," said David Bar-Ilan, Mr. Netanyahu's policy advisor.

"This is a tactic that we have become familiar with — as negotiations with the Palestinians progress and a successful conclusion is imminent, they always find ways of creating a mini-crisis so Israel will be forced to

make more concessions at the last minute," he said.

Earlier Tuesday, the two sides decided to postpone by a day the resumption of formal talks on Hebron after U.S. mediator Dennis Ross said informal contacts were more productive.

The negotiations have reached a sensitive stage, and Israeli officials have said agreement could be reached within days.

However, it was not clear Tuesday whether Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Arafat would meet soon to wrap up a deal. Bar-Ilan said the two leaders would only meet once the time was ripe to approve an accord, not to negotiate the deal themselves.

Israeli newspapers reported that the settlers who live in Hebron amid 94,000 Palestinians were trying to solidify their hold in the city before a troop pullback.

The settlers fear that their six enclaves will not be able to expand if the Palestinians receive control over civilian affairs in Hebron, including the authority to issue building permits.

(Continued on page 7)

Chirac to address Palestinian council

RAMALLAH (AFP) — French President Jacques Chirac will become the first world leader to address the Palestinian legislative council during his visit here next week, a Palestinian official said.

Ahmad Abdul Rahman, the cabinet secretary of Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, said Mr. Chirac would make a speech to the 88-member assembly at its headquarters in the West Bank self-rule area of Ramallah.

The French president would become the first foreign head of state to address the council, considered by Palestinians a major symbol in their quest for an independent state.

The council, outlined in the 1995 interim self-rule accord with Israel, was formed after historic Palestinian elections last January.

Mr. Chirac's visit to the Palestinian territories "is a strong message of support for the peace process and the Palestinian side, coming during crisis in negotiations over Israeli intransigence," Abdul Rahman said.

Mr. Chirac is to arrive Monday in West Jerusalem where he will meet Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, then pass through

Bethlehem en route to Ramallah the following Wednesday, where he will meet Mr. Arafat.

The two leaders will then travel to the heartland of Palestinian self-rule, the Gaza Strip.

The visit is part of a Middle East tour by Mr. Chirac from October 19 to 25.

Mr. Chirac inaugurates a street in Gaza City named after his predecessor and ideological mentor Charles de Gaulle during a visit, the mayor said.

Mr. Chirac and Mr. Arafat will unveil a marble plaque proclaiming "Charles de Gaulle Street," an avenue in downtown Gaza City running in front of Mr. Arafat's guest mansion, Awn Al Shawas said.

The street is being renamed as part of a municipal campaign to dedicate roads to "world leaders who have served the Palestinian and Arab causes," Mr. Shawas said.

The half-kilometre street was formerly named after Ahmad Orabi, an Egyptian nationalist hero who led a revolt against British occupation of his country in the late 1800s.

"De Gaulle" will intersect with Gamal Abdul Nasser Street, named after the former Egyptian president, and Omar Ben Al Khattab, one of the 7th century successors of Prophet Mohammad.

Israel rejects French rule as mediator, page 12

Saddam-backed Barzani forces beef up Erbil against Talabani

ERBIL (Agencies) — Thousands of Baghdad-backed Kurdish fighters streamed into this northern Iraqi city on Tuesday to defend it against a rival faction which Turkey charged was aided by Iranian soldiers.

The charge from Ankara, combined with an accusation from the Baghdad opposition that Iraqi tanks had taken up "offensive" positions outside Erbil, stoked fears the Kurdish battles could erupt into a wider regional war.

Washington launched cruise missile strikes south of Baghdad last month after Iraqi troops helped the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) capture Erbil from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) six weeks ago.

Thousands of KDP fighters armed with guns and rocket-propelled grenades were arriving here Tuesday or heading to the frontline to the east to stall the counter-offensive by the PUK.

A U.N. official said a rag-tag army of up to 20,000 KDP fighters had gathered in their stronghold of Salahuddin on Monday, but had to commandeer cars and trucks to find transport south to Erbil and

further east.

PUK leader Jalal Talabani told AFP from northern Iraq that his advancing guerrillas would stop short of storming Erbil and instead expected its residents to rise up against KDP forces.

He said earlier that the PUK would not attack Erbil because it was surrounded by Iraqi troops, and Tuesday he said he did not expect Baghdad to intervene.

But the Iraqi National Congress, an umbrella organisation that includes the warring Kurdish factions and other opposition groups, warned from London that "Iraqi tanks have taken offensive positions" southeast of Erbil.

Mr. Ammar could not confirm the report.

Meanwhile, Turkish Foreign Minister Tansu Ciller said that Turkey had received information that there were Iranians siding with the PUK in the fighting.

"We have received information suggesting that there are Iranians in the forces of (PUK leader) Jalal Talabani," Mrs. Ciller said after a meeting with President Suleyman Demirel, according to the Anatolia

(Continued on page 7)

The KDP said it had prevented the PUK from taking Degala, a village which commands access to Erbil, 60 kilometres to the east and which the PUK claimed to have captured on Monday.

A U.N. spokesman in Baghdad, Wolde Ammar, backed the KDP assertion, even though other U.N. officials said Monday that it had fallen.

The KDP said fighting continued early Tuesday

(Continued on page 7)

Hariri resigns, paving way for reappointment

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanon's billionaire prime minister, Rafik Hariri, chaired his last cabinet meeting on Tuesday before he stepped down and parliament was dissolved.

The meeting, also attended by President Elias Hrawi, discussed a plan to shut down many private television and radio stations which has aroused angry opposition from the press.

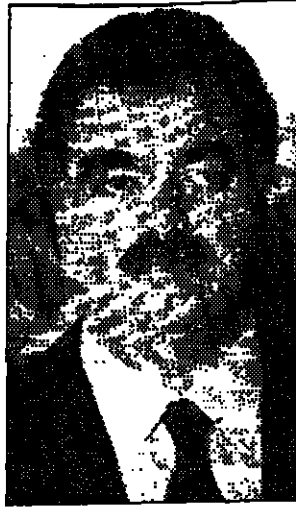
The parliament's four-year mandate was to expire at midnight Tuesday when, under the Lebanese constitution, the prime minister and his cabinet must also resign.

However, Mr. Hariri is expected to be swiftly reappointed when Mr. Hrawi holds consultations with new members of parliament (MPs) to choose the next prime minister.

"The mandate of the council of ministers has ended according to the constitution so this government has resigned," Mr. Hariri said after a meeting with President Hrawi.

Mr. Hariri, a billionaire tycoon who has held office since October 1992, is expected to be reappointed after the new parliament meets on October 22 to elect a speaker.

He will stay on in a caretaker capacity until the new government is formed. It will be the third the 51-year-old Sunni



Rafik Hariri

Muslim politician has headed in four years.

Consultations on the choice of new prime minister will begin when parliament elects a new speaker. Mr. Hrawi will hear the views of each of the 128 deputies and must name the majority choice to head the new government.

Mr. Hariri, who won his first parliamentary seat in the elections, heads one of the biggest blocs in parliament and is expected to be reappointed with the help of powerful Syrian-backed allies in parliament.

His new strength in parliament is also expected to make it easier for him to push through projects in his multi-billion dollar reconstruction plan which were blocked by the previous parliament.

A visit to Lebanon by French President Jacques

Chirac on October 24-25 will interrupt Mr. Hrawi's consultations with the deputies.

However, official sources have said the formation of a new government, which must receive a parliamentary vote of confidence, would probably be completed by the end of this month or the start of November.

Mr. Hariri has the crucial backing of Syria, the main foreign power-broker in Lebanon, and the confidence of the United States and Europe.

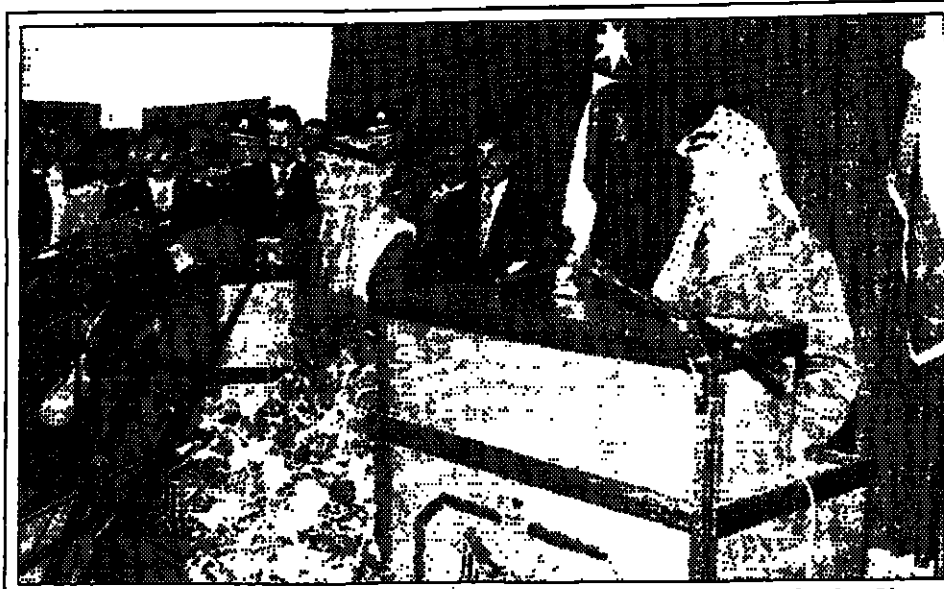
Mr. Hariri's financial clout has also helped put Lebanon back on track after its devastating 1975-90 civil war.

His four-year term has seen the launch of a multi-billion-dollar reconstruction scheme for the centre of Beirut carried out by the private company Solidere, in which he is a major shareholder.

Electricity and telephone lines have largely been restored while bridges and motor ways are being built around the country.

However, much of the euphoria which greeted his appointment in October 1992 has dissipated as the country paid the price of his policies.

Lebanon's public debt has tripled from \$3.8 to \$9.5 billion and social unrest fuelled by soaring prices and alleged government corruption has grown.



KING IN JERICHO: His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat on Tuesday address a press conference after talks in the Palestinian self-rule town of Jericho (see page 1) (photo by Yousef Allan)

Jordan is hopeful for eventual U.N. approval for Amman-Baghdad flights

AMMAN — Officials said Tuesday Jordan remained hopeful that the United Nations Sanctions Committee would allow Royal Jordanian (RJ) to operate weekly flights between Amman and Baghdad despite a negative decision on Monday by the panel to give blanket advance approval for such flights.

The Jordanian request for Amman-Baghdad flights came ahead of the expected implementation of an oil-for-food agreement between Iraq and the United Nations that would bring about a regular flow of United Nations officials in and out of Iraq.

The six-year-old United Nations sanctions against Iraq include a ban on civil aviation between Iraq and the outside world. Iraq's only official outlet is the 1,000-kilometre overland route that runs through Jordan. The officials noted that the decision by the Sanctions Committee was that it would consider allowing Amman-Baghdad flights upon specific requests based on humanitarian grounds as well as for U.N. purposes.

"Regular flights between Amman and Baghdad will become a necessity once Resolution 986 is implemented," said an official referring to the U.N. resolution that allows Iraq to export oil worth \$1 billion every three months in return for food and medicine under the world body's supervision.

According to the officials, "Regular flights between Amman and Baghdad will become a necessity once Resolution 986 is implemented," said an official referring to the U.N. resolution that allows Iraq to export oil worth \$1 billion every three months in return for food and medicine under the world body's supervision.

The Jordanian request to the Sanctions Committee said the flights would be used to carry U.N. observers and other staff as well as pilgrims to holy sites to and from Iraq.

The Sanctions Committee declined to give blanket advance approval to the request.

The chairman of the committee, Germany's Tono Eitel, was quoted as saying by Reuters that such flights would be considered "case-by-case, and hopefully approved."

The U.N. imposed the sweeping sanctions on Iraq in August 1990 following that country's invasion of Kuwait. All air flights between Iraq and the outside world were halted immediately, but Iraqi Airways continued to operate a daily flight to Amman until Jan. 15, one day before a U.S.-led coalition launched a successful offensive to dislodge Iraq from Kuwait.

Jordan has been trying since then to get approval for a limited number of flights to and from Baghdad.

Iraq had also filed requests to the Sanctions Committee for approval for flights by Iraqi Airways, but had always been turned down.

In its meeting on Monday, the Sanctions Committee was also briefed by a U.N. official on the status of the oil-for-food deal. Reuters reported.

Mr. Eitel said there had been no change since last week when the Security Council was told that security conditions in

north Iraq were not yet ripe for the plan to be implemented.

Still at issue were the number of U.N. inspectors needed to oversee operations and their freedom of movement, according to Reuters.

"The Iraqis want some advance notice of their movements, possibly one or two weeks, which is of course difficult, to put it mildly, impossible to accept, to put it more correctly," Mr. Eitel said.

But the U.N. official who briefed the committee said Secretary-General Boutros Ghali was "confident that all the questions still under discussion with the Iraqi side would be solved."

Turkish request turned down

The Sanctions Committee also turned down a Turkish request to be allowed to rent Iraq a satellite transponder band to broadcast television programmes seen within Iraq as well as by its neighbours and in western Europe.

"We could not agree because the rendering of services of this kind was not considered a civilian need," Mr. Eitel said.

The request was for the Turkish Telekom Administration to rent Iraq a transponder band from Turksat 1-C satellite, with payments to be made in advance in U.S. currency and in cash. The deal, for which no cost was given, would not have involved the shipment to Iraq of any equipment or spare parts.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Egypt signs nuclear test ban treaty

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — Egypt signed Monday the nuclear test ban treaty, becoming the 124th signatory in under one month, a U.N. spokeswoman said. Egypt's U.N. Ambassador Nabil Al Araby, an expert on disarmament affairs, signed on his country's behalf, said spokeswoman Sylvana Foa. Israel signed on Sept. 25 a day after the treaty was opened to signatures. Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy said that for the treaty to be ratified, Israel would have to take into account the attitudes of other countries in the region. Last month, Israel linked its signature to that of Egypt. But since Israel's was put to paper, Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa had indicated Cairo's signature would be coming in a matter of weeks. In order to take effect, the treaty must be signed and ratified by 44 countries — those with nuclear reactors — which are mentioned specifically in the text. Only five countries on the list have yet to sign the treaty: Algeria, Bangladesh, North Korea, India and Pakistan. Syria has not yet signed the treaty, but it is not on the list of 44, the U.N. said.

Kuwaiti emir meets British minister

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — British Foreign Office Minister of State Jeremy Hanley met Kuwait's head of state and prime minister on Tuesday during a tour of Gulf Arab states, the official Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) said. Mr. Hanley, on the second leg of a Gulf tour, met the Emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, followed by talks with the crown prince and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, KUNA said, without elaborating on the talks. In an interview with KUNA on Monday, Mr. Hanley reiterated Britain's support for Kuwait "in the face of threats" from Iraq. Mr. Hanley arrived in Kuwait on Monday from Saudi Arabia and will travel on from here to Qatar.

Israel to help build monument for Rwanda

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is to help build a monument to victims of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, officials at the Jewish state's own genocide memorial said Tuesday. Rwandan Vice President Paul Kagame accepted an offer of Israeli "technical assistance" for its planned monument during a visit to the Yad Vachem memorial. Major General Kagame, who is also Rwanda's defence minister, later had lunch with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and was also to meet President Ezer Weizman during his five-day visit. Rwanda broke diplomatic relations with Israel in 1976 but ties were restored after the genocide in which at least 500,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slaughtered in ethnic bloodletting between April and July 1994.

Tajik government, opposition meet in Iran

TEHRAN (AFP) — Representatives from the Tajik government and Islamic opposition held peace talks in the Iranian capital on Tuesday in preparation for a summit in Moscow soon. U.N. special envoy for Tajikistan, Gerd Merrem, was also present at the talks which aim to set an agenda for the upcoming negotiations between Tajik President Emomali Rakhmanov and opposition leader Abdollah Nuri. Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Vaezi told AFP before the meeting that his country "fully supported" the U.N.'s search for peace in Tajikistan. "This meeting is a new initiative to prepare for the summit in Moscow," he said, adding that the summit's date had not yet been fixed. Mr. Merrem said "the first step" had been taken in preparation for the high-level meeting and called for compromise as "the key in advancing the peace process." "The Moscow meeting should allow the resumption of the negotiations," he said.

Lebanon truce committee sends mission to Israel-shelled village

SAFAD AL BAITIKH, Lebanon (AFP) — An international committee monitoring a truce in South Lebanon sent an investigation team on Tuesday to a village where 12 civilians were wounded in Israeli shelling last week.

The nine-member team of investigation was made up of three French officials, two Americans, two Syrians and two Lebanese and was accompanied by U.N. peacekeepers who provided helicopters and armoured cars.

The investigators, on the first mission of its kind, interviewed witnesses and a Lebanese army captain on the shelling of Safad Al Baitikh village, east of the port city of Tyre.

The monitoring committee decided to send the team at a meeting on Monday to study Lebanon's protest that Israeli shelling wounded 12 members of

the same family in Safad Al Baitikh.

The committee, which groups France, Israel, Lebanon, Syria and the United States, met at the headquarters of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in Naqura on the border with Israel.

The 12 civilians, including four women and at least three teenagers, were injured Friday when Israeli troops shelled villages in South Lebanon in retaliation for an attack by Iranian-backed Hizbollah guerrillas.

Lebanon has accused Israel of violating an April 26 ceasefire accord between Hizbollah and the Jewish state under which both sides agreed to spare civilians from their conflict.

Israel initially justified Friday's shelling by saying Hizbollah violated the truce first by firing mortars

from inside a civilian area. But it later acknowledged that the source of fire was "from the edges" of a village.

Friday's casualties were the most serious involving civilians since the April accord which ended Israel's 17-day offensive against Hizbollah guerrillas that left 200 dead, mostly civilians.

The accord, brokered by the United States and France, allows Lebanon and Israel to file complaints to the monitoring committee which is charged with ruling on alleged violations.

The monitoring committee issued a statement on Sept. 25 blaming both Israel and Hizbollah and calling on both sides to avoid civilian areas. Hizbollah spearheaded attacks to end Israel's occupation of a border zone.

Taleban rulers order ban against 'happy firing' in Kabul

KABUL (AFP) — Kabul's Taleban leadership warned its fighters that they will be punished if they fire their weapons into the air in celebration, Taleban-run state radio said Tuesday.

The warning was broadcast on the newly rechristened Radio Shariat — until recently called radio Kabul — after scores of Taleban fighters in the capital opened up in a 15-minute burst of "happy fire" late Monday.

"All security posts and

respected Taleban are requested not to fire into the air to avoid wastage of ammunition and in order not to disturb the people's peaceful life," Radio Shariat said.

"Those who were engaged in this firing have been arrested and will be punished," it added.

The burst of fire came as the Taleban battled guerrillas and supporters of the ex-government's strongman Ahmad Shah Masood battled for control of villages

north of the capital which the Taleban seized from him 18 days ago.

The militia has subsequently suffered a series of battlefield reverses in the northern province traditionally loyal to Mr. Masood, dealing them a severe strategic blow after their stunning successes around Kabul.

Afghans frequently fire into the air — so-called happy firing — in celebration of military victories, the arrival of reinforce-

ments and even to mark the birth of a son or at weddings.

The call came after fighters fired anti-aircraft guns, heavy and light machine guns, rocket propelled grenades and flares over the nervous city, apparently after fighters heard a false report of a Taleban victory against the forces of the ousted government north of here.

"We received a report that the Islamic Taleban movement had won a major vic-

tory during the day, but we were unfortunately later told this was not true," Taleban Mohammed Rafiq told AFP.

The fusillade sent locals scurrying indoors, at first fearing an attack in the city and later worried about being struck by falling shrapnel from shells fired into the air.

Red and green tracer bullets arced across the night sky as rocket propelled grenades exploded near a slowly sinking flare.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 Muppet Show
14:30 The Bold and the Beautiful
15:00 Pyramide
15:30 Serie — Les Compagnons de L'Adventure
16:00 Documentary
16:30 Blizzard Island
17:00 NewsFlash
17:15 The Adventures
17:30 Kelly
18:00 Ushuaia
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Sports
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Four Seasons
20:00 Super Stars of Action
20:30 Challenges
21:10 NBA Basketball
22:00 News in English
22:30 Drama — Bugs
23:15 Hart to Hart
23:59 Comedy — Who is the Boss?

PRAYER TIMES

04:18 Fajr
05:35 Sunrise/Duha
11:21 Dhuhur
14:36 Asr
17:08 Maghreb
18:25 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifteh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 827126
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295
English-speaking Latia Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

Dr. Mazen Nhall 830435
Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 898140
Dr. Fakher Bilbeisi 663412
Dr. Abdul Majid Al Sha'er 790405
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 390280
Al Asemu pharmacy 637055
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Nairoukh pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir 276852
Al Quds pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Zahur Al Qadi 906606
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Deserts 11/26
Jordan Valley 17/31
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 21, Aqaba 29 Humidity readings: Amman 50 per cent, Aqaba 52 per cent.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Husseini Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, 644281/6
Akhlel Maternity, 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malbas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 66727/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bashir, 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111
FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified. Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:00 Damascus (RJ)
08:30 Jeddah (RJ)
08:55 Larnaca (RJ)
09:10 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
14:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
16:30 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
17:00 Paris (RJ)
17:15 Istanbul (RJ)
17:50 Madrid (RJ)
18:00 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
18:10 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
18:15 London, Vienna (RJ)
18:15 Rome (RJ)
23:30 Beirut (RJ)
00:10 Cairo (RJ)
03:25 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
Other Flights
10:00 Sanaa, Hudaydah (IY)
11:15 Jeddah (SV)
12:00 Karachi, Abu Dhabi (PK)

12:15 Cairo (MS)
12:40 Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:30 Tunis (TU)
14:00 Vienna (OS)
15:20 Algiers (AH)
18:00 Dubai (EK)
19:40 London, Beirut (BA)
20:10 Beirut (ME)
20:40 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:35 Larnaca (CY)
22:20 Amsterdam (KL)
22:30 Athens (OA)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights
18:45 Tel Aviv (QAIA) (RW)

DEPARTURES

10:00 Istanbul, Rome (RJ)
10:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
10:40 Berlin, London (RJ)
11:10 Casablanca (RJ)
11:45 Istanbul (RJ)
19:20 Colombo (RJ)
19:45 Beirut (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
20:10 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
20:20 New Delhi (RJ)
20:30 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
21:15 Dubai, Muscat (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (RJ)
Other Flights
03:00 Amsterdam (KL)
07:45 Beirut (ME)
08:15 London (BA)
11:00 Sanaa (IY)
12:45 Jeddah (SV)
13:15 Beirut, Abu Dhabi, Karachi (PK)
13:30 Bahrain, Al Ain (GF)
14:30 Tunis (TU)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 700/500
Banana 500/500
Banana (mulhammar) 420/420
Banana (imported) 840/620
Cabbage 130/80
Carrot 280/150
Cauliflower 350/220
Cucumber (large) 180/100
Cucumber (small) 340/200
Eggplant 230/140
Garlic 700/450
Grapes 480/150
Guava 600/400
Lemon 360/200
Marrow (large) 220/200
Marrow (small) 350/250
Mulukhiyah 220/110
Onion (green) 300/180
Onion (dry) 140/80
Okra 950/550
Olive 580/450
Pear 680/600
Pepper (hot) 330/200
Pepper (sweet) 360/220
Pomegranate 380/220
Potato 340/240
Spinach 300/180
Spring Bean 620/420
Tomato 220/140



LOOKING INTO ROAD SAFETY: His Royal Highness Prince Faisal Ben Al Hussein Tuesday meets with Public Security Department (PSD) Director Nasouh Muheddin to discuss road safety and PSD plans to establish a traffic institute. Prince Faisal also visited the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department where he was briefed on new procedures to facilitate the issuing of drivers' licences and vehicle registration permits. The department began issuing computer-generated licences and permits on Oct. 12. Prince Faisal was accompanied by Gen. Muheddin and Assistant PSD Director for Traffic Affairs Maj. Gen. Abdul Raouf Hussein (Petra photo)

Ministry calls for increased help for the handicapped

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Hamad Abu Jamous Tuesday appealed for citizen contributions directed to the rehabilitation of the handicapped who, he said, constitute approximately 10 per cent of the population.

"Ministry centres and those run by voluntary organisations offer care and training to around 10,000 disabled persons, mainly children, but services are below the required level," said the minister who maintained that the government cannot cover every requirement and that the cost of care for each disabled person averages to JD300 each month.

"The ministry as well as non-governmental voluntary associations require urgent financial aid for rehabilitating handicapped persons and it hopes that the private sector will help establish centres for affected children's care," added the minister.

He said the ministry is planning to pool its resources with those of charitable and voluntary organisations and, in conjunction with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA), to initiate a programme for rehabilitating handicapped children in their own homes and within familiar environments especially those four or five years of age.

Mr. Abu Jamous stated that the ministry also hopes to create income generating businesses and provide vocational training to the disabled in cooperation with the Vocational Training Corporation (VTC).

The potential project aims to enable the handicapped to participate more fully in their community.

The plan, he added, is also necessary in view of the rising cost of caring for the handicapped in institutions, and that, if effected, the Ministry of Social Development will provide guidance

to family members and make regular house visits to provide advice and guidance.

Mr. Abu Jamous said the ministry offers educational, health and rehabilitation services to the disabled and in some cases, cash aid.

In addition to exempting handicapped people from paying customs duty on imported health and movement aids, he said, there is a release from the JD300 in work permit fees for foreign maids who care for the handicapped.

The ministry has also made arrangements for a 50 per cent discount on travel fares for disabled persons, for enrolment in schools and universities and for qualified handicapped workers to be employed by private and public institutions.

According to the minister, Jordanian law mandates that various organisations employ qualified handicapped persons to fill two per cent of their posts.

Marine oil pollution monitoring station to operate in Aqaba

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Japanese government has supplied all necessary equipment for a marine oil pollution monitoring and fighting station at Aqaba and the facility is expected to be operational by the end of the year, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) said Tuesday.

The centre is one of the early realisations of joint Arab-Israeli projects stemming from the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process.

The centre will work in close coordination with similar facilities being set up in Israel and Egypt and

the facilities and equipment available at the three stations would be shared by the three countries to fight oil pollution if and when it occurs.

According to diplomats, the door is open for Saudi Arabia, which shares the Gulf of Aqaba with Jordan, Israel and Egypt, to join the project, but there has been little Saudi movement in this regard.

Japan, which chairs a working group on the environment in the multilateral phase of the peace process, supplied equipment worth \$5.5 million to the Aqaba station. The European Union (EU) is financing the centre in Egypt and the U.S. is helping Israel develop an

existing facility at Eilat.

The financing for the Aqaba facility came from the Japanese government. JICA is the Tokyo government's arm to channel grant aid.

According to JICA, the "objective of the project is the procurement of equipment to establish an oil spill combat capability at Aqaba within the framework of the upper Gulf of Aqaba oil spill contingency project formulated by the working group on the environment of the multilateral peace process."

The facility "is a measure to combat potential oil spillages by vessels navigating in the Gulf of Aqaba in view of the expansion of

economic activities and the necessity for environmental conservation in the area."

The absence of effective arrangement to fight marine oil pollution in the Gulf of Aqaba has been a source of concern for environmentalists, who point out that, apart from posing hazards to shipping and human beings, oil pollution in the area could seriously affect the species of underwater coral reefs for which Aqaba is famous.

The function of the Aqaba centre is divided into four parts: reduction of oil spreading, recovery and containment, transportation and miscellaneous.

The centre will have deflecting and protection

booms, oil skimmers, an emergency off-loading system, a vacuum truck, an oil/water separator, a demulsifying unit, oil combat vessels, communication and lighting equipment, steam cleaners, a crane for tugs and personal safety equipment and protective clothing among other things.

The facilities in Egypt and Israel will have equipment of similar nature. The basic designs and equipment of the three facilities, which will have direct lines of communication, are complementary to each other so that in the event of oil pollution the three might work together.

489 kilos of hashish seized in the south

AMMAN (Petra) — The Anti-Narcotics Department Tuesday announced that officers have seized 489 kilogrammes of hashish in the southern part of the Kingdom.

It described the arrest of four people involved in the attempt to smuggle the drugs to an unspecified neighbouring country, according to Department Director Col. Nazih Shraideh.

Col. Shraideh stated the department received information about a group attempt to smuggle the hashish in a lorry.

Department patrols investigated the matter and moved to the scene where they arrested four people attempting to pass

the hashish on to other smugglers.

Meanwhile, in separate cases, anti-narcotic patrols have arrested four persons in connection with attempts to peddle narcotics.

In the Amman area, anti-narcotic patrols arrested two persons carrying 8,022 grammes of heroin, and in Ramtha, patrols arrested two persons involved in the transport of 67.5 grammes of heroin wrapped in aluminium foil.

Col. Shraideh added that the PSD patrols last month arrested 15 people carrying small quantities of narcotics.

Palestinian mayor urges mosques to edify Jerusalem quest

AMMAN (Petra) — The mayor of the Palestinian village Um Al Fahem, Sheikh Raed Salah, has appealed to Arab and Muslim nations to adopt a unified stand towards the Arab city of Jerusalem and its holy shrines.

Addressing a seminar entitled "The Future of Jerusalem" held at the Professional Associations Complex in Amman, Sheikh Salah said that it is incumbent on Arab and Islamic countries to transform mosques and Islamic cultural centres into platforms for mass education about Jerusalem.

This is geared, he said, to manifesting a united protection of Al Aqsa Mosque and other holy sites in Arab Jerusalem.

Sheikh Salah outlined the

current state of affairs of Islamic holy sites as well as Muslim historical links with Jerusalem through the ages.

He recalled that under British rule in Palestine, several committees of historians working between 1936 and 1944, compiled reports proving beyond question that the Burak (Wailing) Wall is a component of Islamic holy sites.

Sheikh Salah reviewed recent events in Jerusalem and around Al Aqsa Mosque following the Israeli initiation of a tunnel entrance running under Al Aqsa Mosque compound and the subsequent demonstrations which resulted in the death and injury of scores of Palestinians.

He warned that the Israelis are planning to

tear and a supposed Third Temple and asked the Arab and Islamic World to shoulder their responsibilities towards the holy shrines.

Also addressing the meeting were: former Prime Minister Taher Al Masri, former Deputy Prime Minister Suleiman Arar and Lower House of Parliament Deputy Ibrahim Zeid Kilani.

The speakers reasserted the importance of Arab Jerusalem and its holy sites for Arab and Muslim nations.

The seminar was organised by the Professional Associations Complex to mark Palestinian Heritage Week and was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour among others.

VTC cements training programme to enroll 50,000 students

AMMAN (Petra) — The Vocational Training Corporation (VTC) has finalised a national plan for enrolling up to 50,000 secondary school students in vocational training programmes by the year 2000. VTC Director General Ali Nasrallah announced Tuesday.

According to the plan, which will be carried out in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, nearly 50 per cent of male students and 35 per cent of female students, having finished their compulsory education, will be trained at VTC centres.

Mr. Nasrallah said that in the current academic year, VTC centres enrolled 6,700 students, an increase of 28 per cent over the previous year, to train in its 150 trades which focus on construction, commerce and services.

He added that increasing numbers of skilled workers will be needed by local labour markets in order to replace foreign workers and to meet the Kingdom's expected demand for skilled labour subsequent to the privatisation of different major corporations.

The VTC students pay an annual fee of JD25, according to Mr. Nasrallah, who maintained that the average student instruction costs the state JD600 adding that each student receives an additional annual JD250 from firms where they participate in internship programmes.

He said the VTC is currently linked to 3,800 industrial institutions for these internship programmes.

Mr. Nasrallah explained that students train for one

to three years, through a network of 36 vocational centres, depending on the nature and requirements of the trade.

The VTC, he said, recently created an institute to serve as the corporation's technical arm and to help enact the new labour law which is still to be endorsed by parliament.

Mr. Nasrallah said that the VTC will soon classify different businesses and trades in accordance with their capacity, equipment and production and that 60 per cent of the countries workers are employed by industrial businesses.

Early this year the VTC created national teams to help the corporation prepare training programmes covering various requirements of trades and demands by the local labour market, he said.

Mr. Nasrallah said that VTC centres have already trained students from Yemen, Sudan, Oman and Bahrain, adding that the VTC has been closely cooperating with the Canadian International Development Agency and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency, both of which will help Jordan establish a \$4 million institute for training in metal industries at the Sahab Industrial City near Amman.

The VTC is also receiving technical aid from the Swiss government and the German Agency for Technical Cooperation, he said.



Health Minister Aref Botaneh Tuesday receives visiting Sudanese counterpart Hsan Ghabshawi with her accompanying Sudanese delegation to review bilateral relations, particularly in the health field and issues relating to the implementation of a health agreement concluded between the two countries in September. Both parties agreed to exchange expertise in such areas as training of health personnel, health information technology and malaria-related research. The meeting was also attended by senior health officials (Petra photo)

University signs agreement with industrial cities

RAMTHA (Petra) — The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) and the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) Tuesday signed an agreement on cooperation in scientific, technical, and health insurance fields.

The agreement, signed by JIEC Director General Assem Hindawi and JUST President Saad Hijazi, provides for the creation of a liaison office, to be called the Industrial Liaison Office, at each of the Kingdom's industrial cities.

The university plans to provide trained staff for this office who will be entrusted with identifying needs and problems facing Jordanian businesses in the industrial cities.

This research is to be studied by the university in a bid to find solutions. The projected office is also slated to organise and

supervise the training of students in the industrial cities' factories, and the agreement stipulates that the first such liaison office will be opened at Al Hassan Industrial City near Irbid with others to follow.

Jordan currently has two industrial cities: Sahab Industrial City near Amman and Al Hassan Industrial City near Irbid but the JIEC plans to open industrial cities in Karak and other governorates.

The agreement provides for JUST to provide consultancy and technical services and also to organise training courses and workshops for the benefit of industrial cities' business managers.

In addition JUST will assume the manufacturing of furniture, spare parts and industrial casts, for the spare parts, to be used in the industrial cities for a nominal fee.

The agreement also provides for engineers working for industrial businesses to participate in teaching JUST courses and scientific seminars and to help organise industrial fairs inside the university for JUST students.

The two sides will also cooperate in environmental protection measures while JUST conducts regular laboratory tests on drinking and wastewater in these industrial cities.

The two sides also agreed that the industrial cities' workers and officials might receive medical treatment at the JUST hospital under a special medical insurance plan.

Nearly 400 industrial businesses are currently housed in the Sahab and Al Hassan industrial cities employing more than 12,000 workers.

g' in Kabul

MARKET

WHAT'S GOING ON

LECTURE

"The Peace Process: Where is it Going?" by Ambassador Edward Djerejian, former U.S. Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs, at the American Center auditorium at 6:00 p.m.

FILM

"James Bond 007" at the British Council at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

***Exhibition entitled "Jerusalem Domes, Doors and Windows"** comprising photos by Julia Reinhold and paintings by Ribam Ghassib at the Inter-Continental Hotel, until Oct. 31.

***Exhibition by Agence France Presse (AFP) photos on "Grapes of Wrath" operations in Lebanon** at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman, until Oct. 20.

****Wadi Al Faynan Art Exhibition** — works of several artists inspired by Wadi Faynan at Balka Art Gallery, Fuhais, until Oct. 31.

***Sculpture and painting exhibition** by Mohammad Bushnaq at Kan Zaman, until Oct. 18.

***Works by Ghassan Abu Lebn** at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, until Oct. 23.

****Amman Sixth International Book Exhibition** at the International Exhibition Centre, University Road, until Oct. 17.

Dole to make last ditch effort in today's debate

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico (AFP) — Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole vowed to pull out all the stops the next time he debates President Bill Clinton, hoping to cut into his commanding lead in the polls.

After prodding from his advisers, the 73-year-old former senator admitted Monday he had been "too easy" on Mr. Clinton during their first televised debate Oct. 6, but promised to give him "hell" when they meet Wednesday night in San Diego, California.

That means Sen. Dole will grill Mr. Clinton in front of millions of viewers on the different scandals that have hit his administration, including Travelgate, Filegate, Whitewater and the latest allegations linking him to

improper campaign contributions from a wealthy Indonesian banking family.

Sen. Dole steered clear of the so-called "character issue" during the first televised debate, from which Mr. Clinton emerged as the more convincing of the two in public opinion surveys.

Sen. Dole's running mate, former Housing Secretary Jack Kemp, 61, was equally polite during his televised debate with Vice-President Al Gore. Mr. Kemp said personal attacks were "beneath" Sen. Dole and himself.

But after the debates left Mr. Clinton's double-digit lead over Sen. Dole practically unscathed, Sen. Dole decided to make Mr. Clinton's ethics in government the main target of his attacks.

In Albuquerque, where Mr. Clinton has been cramming since Sunday for his second face-off with Sen. Dole, the White House has shrugged off the Republican rival's threats.

Spokesman Michael McCurry branded Sen. Dole's decision to play the scandal card "desperation politics", stemming from his lack of a political plan.

Three weeks before the presidential elections, the political pulse, as measured Tuesday in a USA Today-CNN survey, gave Mr. Clinton a whopping 54-36 per cent lead over Sen. Dole.

"It certainly would take a miracle" for Sen. Dole to carry the Nov. 5 vote, James Thurber, American University presidential studies director, told AFP.

Mr. Clinton has practically impenetrable armour for any election: a healthy U.S. economy.

"The attack on character is the only avenue open for Dole," said Mr. Thurber. "There is no other issue," he said, adding that Sen. Dole's proposed 15 per cent tax cut has not caught on with the public.

The expert said the scandal card could easily backfire on Sen. Dole, since low unemployment and crime far outweighed ethical issues for Americans, despite their doubts on Mr. Clinton's integrity.

"All these character issues do not affect their life. They care about the economy and other things like crime," Mr. Thurber said.

"He is really in a tight spot," he added referring to Sen. Dole. "Americans do not like mudslinging and negative attacks."

In addition, an opinion poll last weekend showed that half the voters at large and nearly one third of Republicans already consider Sen. Dole's campaign too negative for their taste.

So while Sen. Dole has little room to maneuver in San Diego, Mr. Clinton has it relatively easy: Sound positive and presidential, while stressing that after interminable probes by Congress and the Justice Department he remains squeaky clean.

On a personal level, Mr. Clinton has a natural advantage over Sen. Dole in public debates. As opposed to their first head-to-head encounter, Wednesday's debate will take the form of a joint press conference, open to questions from the public.



Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole greets supporters following a brief stopover in Kansas City Monday. Sen. Dole travelled to California to prepare for the next presidential debate Wednesday (Reuters photo)

15 shot as demolition protest turns into mob violence in India

NEW DELHI (AFP) — At least 15 people suffered gunshot wounds and scores were injured after thousands of protesters fought a five-hour battle with police here Tuesday.

Violence erupted after a bulldozer was brought in to demolish illegal houses and shops in the poorer district of Dabri in the west of the city.

Police tried to disperse the crowd with batons and tear gas but were attacked by around 5,000 protesters armed with rocks and

stones. Police then opened fire as the crowd firebombed several buildings and vehicles.

Around 6,000 police were called in to quell the riot and remove barricades. Sixteen officers and two fire fighters were reported injured.

U.S. Chillar, the divisional fire officer, said: "The mob firebombed a fire brigade truck, injuring the driver badly," a police control room spokeswoman had said earlier: "The situation is getting out of control."

The mob is setting fire to everything in sight.

The injured were taken to the state-run Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Hospital nearby. There were no reports of their condition.

Nine people had to be rescued from a Delhi development authority office after it was set on fire.

The New Delhi administration has been engaged in a massive drive to demolish illegal constructions which have mushroomed across the city of 10 million people.

Sri Lankan Tamil Tigers resume killings as leader faces charges

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil Tiger guerrillas have shot dead a civilian after trying him to a lamp-post in northern Sri Lanka in a bid to discourage informants from collaborating with security forces, the military said Tuesday.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) carried out the summary killing at Thinnaveli, on the Jaffna peninsula, Monday and left a note near the body saying it was the punishment for traitors.

Officials said the shooting was reminiscent of lamp-post killings carried out by the LTTE in the early 1980s when they systematically eliminated members of rival Tamil groups bidding for leadership of the separatist campaign.

"There has been several incidents of Tiger infiltrators terrorising villagers," a military official here said.

"These things are clearly designed to prevent information being passed on to the military."

Security forces captured Jaffna, the main bastion of the LTTE, in December after seven weeks of fighting but the military has said hundreds of Tigers remain in hiding in the area.

The lamp-post killing coincided with the state attorney general filing charges against the Tiger supremo on a record 712 counts in connection with the Jan. 31 bombing of the Central Bank here.

Officials said the lamp-post killings may also be intended to prevent Tamil civilians giving evidence against Prabhakaran, who is named as the main accused in the bank bombing which killed 91 people and wounded 1,400.

Prabhakaran, who turns 42 next month, is charged together with nine of his closest aides under the tough Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA) before the Colombo high court, officials said.

It is almost certain a summons will not be served on Prabhakaran, who is believed to be hiding somewhere in the island's north-east and leading a protracted campaign for a separate state called Eelam.

Officials say the case is more of an academic exercise that could pave the way for a formal ban on the group, which has earned a reputation as one of the world's deadliest guerrilla organisations.

The United States has dubbed the Lte a terrorist organisation and is plan-

ning action to prevent international funding for the group, which has offices in 42 countries.

Analysts saw Monday's action by Sri Lanka's attorney general as a prelude to outlawing the LTTE and mounting international pressure for a global crackdown against the Tigers.

There has been no reaction from the LTTE to the court action against Prabhakaran, who faces similar charges before an Indian court for the assassination of former Indian Premier Rajiv Gandhi in 1991.

Although the LTTE has been fighting security forces for decades, the Tigers are not formally banned in Sri Lanka.

The Tiger chief also carries a prize of \$ 1/2 million on his head, the highest reward offered for the arrest of any fugitive in Sri Lanka.

The bombing of the Central Bank came a month after security forces captured the LTTE's main bastion of Jaffna in the north of the country following a ferocious battle which killed an estimated 3,000 rebels and 500 government troops.

China tells U.S. to stay out of islands dispute

BEIJING (R) — China hinted Tuesday the United States should not intervene in a dispute between China and Japan over a group of islands in the East China Sea.

"This is an issue between China and Japan and no third party may intervene in this matter," Foreign Ministry Spokesman Shen Guofang said at a briefing.

Mr. Shen was asked to comment on a U.S. congressional report that urged Washington to defend the islands on the basis of a U.S.-Japan security pact. The islands are claimed by Beijing and Taipei as the Diaoyu and by Tokyo as the Senkaku.

"The U.S.-Japan security pact is a bilateral defence arrangement and cannot exceed this scope," Mr. Shen said.

"If it exceeds this bilateral scope or is targeted at the interests of a third party, it will certainly cause uneasiness and vigilance among neighbouring Asian countries, including China, and bring complicated factors into regional security," he said.

Mr. Shen reiterated the islands were an inseparable part of China.

Japan's claim to the uninhabited islands has triggered anti-Japanese demonstrations in Hong Kong and Taiwan since a Japanese right-wing group built a makeshift lighthouse on one of the islands in July.

Emotions were fanned last month when a Hong Kong activist drowned after he jumped into stormy waters around the island to demonstrate Chinese claims.

Japan has sought to calm passions in the dispute and asked China and Japan to prevent a recurrence of the landings.



Indonesian President Suharto (left) shakes hands with East Timorese Nobel Peace Prize laureate Bishop Carlos Belo (right) during a rare visit to East Timor Tuesday. A witness said that President Suharto and Bishop Belo appeared not to exchange any words. Mr. Suharto visited the territory to inaugurate a number of development projects including a 27 metre high statue of Jesus Christ (Reuters photo)

Suharto visits East Timor, meets Nobel-winning bishop

DILI, East Timor (R) — Indonesian President Suharto shook hands perfunctorily with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Bishop Carlos Belo during a rare visit to East Timor Tuesday but the two did not exchange words, witnesses said.

President Suharto flew for a brief visit to the troubled territory to inaugurate development projects and a 27-metre high statue of Jesus Christ, said to be the tallest outside Rio De Janeiro in Brazil.

It was his third visit to the Catholic-dominated former Portuguese colony, annexed by mainly Muslim Indonesia two decades ago after a military invasion.

Bishop Belo, Catholic bishop of East Timor, and self-exiled East Timor resistance leader Jose Ramos Horta were jointly awarded the 1996 Nobel Peace Prize Friday for their role "towards a just and peaceful solution to the conflict" in the territory.

In Sydney, Ramos-Horta dismissed President Suharto's visit to his homeland as a publicity stunt.

He said the people of East Timor needed no help from Indonesia to build statues of Christ and added that the statue's height was a reference to the 27 provinces claimed by Indonesia — including East Timor.

President Suharto signed brass plaques inaugurating projects to build bridges and roads and the statue at a ceremony held at the seafloor office of East Timor's Jakarta-appointed governor.

Bishop Belo, who was seated among dignitaries to the president's right, was pushed forward by officials to the Dais. President Suharto briefly shook hands with him without saying anything.

President Suharto shook Bishop Belo's hand again on emerging from a display of the projects but again no words passed between them.

Pietro Sambri, the papal nuncio, sat beside Bishop Belo during the ceremony and confirmed there had been no exchange of words between the two.

However he pointed out that Bishop Belo was accompanying the president on a helicopter ride over the Christ statue, built on a

headland overlooking Dili Bay.

Indonesia has expressed indignation over the Nobel award to Ramos-Horta, calling him a political opportunist. It has avoided comment on Bishop Belo, who has had to walk a tightrope between the territory's administrators and his flock.

Security was tight during President Suharto's visit to prevent any pro-independence demonstration by Timorese. Troops and police lined the route from the airport to the governor's office, a two-storey white Portuguese colonial building facing the sea.

Guests were screened by security guards and the public was kept outside the low iron railing outside the parking lot of the office.

Scattered groups of people lined the route from the airport, standing in the shade of trees and banana thickets. The ceremony was held under a blazing sun with a breeze stirring the red and white Indonesian flags flying from government buildings.

President Suharto gave a brief speech in which he did not mention Bishop Belo or the Nobel award, but said that Indonesia's state philosophy recognised all religions.

"The freedom of religion is a very basic right, because it is directly linked with human dignity," he said. "Religious complexity is a potential strength that we can use to boost development."

Earlier, Bishop Belo was greeted by members of President Suharto's delegation, including State Secretary Mudianto, armed forces Chief General Feisal Tanjung and the ministers for religious affairs, public works and the interior.

Gen. Tanjung warmly shook Bishop Belo's hand and sat next to him during the ceremony, witnesses said.

Meanwhile, the leader of Indonesia's largest Islamic organisation predicted that attacks inflamed by religious passions, like those on churches in East Java last week, could recur.

Abdurrahman Wahid, head of the 30-million strong Nahdlatul Ulama, told Reuters in an interview

that intolerance was the root cause behind the arson attacks on up to 25 churches around Situbondo in East Java after a Muslim mob was angered by a court hearing in a blasphemy case.

Church groups in Surabaya say six people were killed in the attacks, although police say only five people, including a pastor, his wife and two children, died when they were trapped in a burning church.

"It will happen again as long as we are not ready to change our orientation in leading the Islamic community," Mr. Wahid said.

Some Muslim leaders promoted a strong brand of nationalism which derided other religions and inflamed intolerance, Mr. Wahid said. He did not mention any names.

"The community should be re-oriented by its leaders towards tolerance and mutual understanding with other religions, to accept other religions and to be at home with pluralism in religion," he said.

Around 85 per cent of Indonesia's population of more than 195 million people are followers of Islam. The state ideology Pancasila promotes religious tolerance and recognises five main religions.

Cardinal Julius Darmatmadja, head of the bishops' conference of Indonesia, said in a statement sent to Reuters Tuesday that he regretted that dissatisfaction and anger on one issue could lead to the destruction of places of worship and the killing of people.

"This event underlines that at this moment we are at a low point in the respect of others, including their property and religion," Darmatmadja said.

The riots started after a crowd of angry Muslims reacted violently and attacked a courthouse after prosecutors sought a maximum five-year jail term for a man accused of blaspheming Islam. The crowd had called for the death sentence.

After destroying the court house, the crowd attacked churches after rumours were spread that the accused, Mohammad Saleh, a Muslim, had taken sanctuary in a church.

Corruption rife in Burmese health care system — Suu Kyi

BANGKOK (AFP) — Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi charged in a column published Tuesday that corruption was rife in Burma's health care system, saying patients had to bribe doctors to receive medical treatment.

Aung San Suu Kyi, in a column printed in the nation newspaper, said that while health care was ostensibly free in Burma, patients were increasingly having to pay for their own supplies and bribe hospital staff.

"Patients not only have to make their own arrangements for getting the necessary medical supplies, they also have to bribe hospital staff in order to receive a

satisfactory service," she wrote.

While the outspoken Nobel Peace Prize laureate did not blatantly point the finger of blame at the government, she said that the dismal situation in Burma's hospitals was "largely due to maladministration."

Aung San Suu Kyi added that a similar situation currently existed within the school system, with teachers selling off grades and examination questions.

She said that teachers were no longer held in respect in Burma, and that low pay in state-run institutions was forcing employees to resort to under-the-table payments in order to

make ends meet.

"State employees who have not become part of the syndrome of daily corruption ... are unable to maintain a standard of living appropriate to their functions," Aung San Suu Kyi said.

Rangoon based analysts say that many state employees are being squeezed by rising inflation as Burma's rickety economy begins to gain steam.

Aung San Suu Kyi has repeatedly attacked the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) for economic mismanagement and a failure to invest in long term projects such as education and health care.

Actor Dirk Bogarde suffers stroke

LONDON (R) — Sir Dirk Bogarde, one of Britain's leading film actors who then carved himself a successful career as a writer, has suffered a stroke at the age of 75. The star of *The Servant* and *Death In Venice* went into hospital for an operation to ease circulation problems but then was hit by a stroke which has affected his left side. His nephew, Brock Van Den Bogarde, told reporters Monday that the actor was progressing well and that doctors expected him to make a full recovery. Bogarde, who first shot to fame as a matinee idol in the Doctor In The House comedy films, later won fame as a writer with seven volumes of autobiography and six novels. Total sales have topped one million.

Italy to encourage teaching of 'pop' music

TURIN, Italy (AFP) — The Italian government will draft legislation by next February to encourage the teaching and playing of "pop" music. Culture Minister Walter Veltroni said here at Turin's first music fair. "Pop music must go into schools and the story of the Beatles should become a matter for study," said Veltroni, 41. He said the proposed law would not only facilitate teaching of popular music but would help bars or small public halls to provide space for young groups of amateur musicians. "We must also build new premises," he said. Last week, the Italian government approved a bill to toughen penalties for record piracy. Mr. Veltroni said sales of counterfeit recordings were put at more than 200 billion lire (\$131 million) a year in Italy. "About 21.5 million pirated cassettes" and records are in circulation representing a loss of 33 per cent for the legal market," he said.

Better late than never....

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A postcard from a lawyer to his client in India took 48 years to reach its destination — by which time both men had died. The Press Trust of India (PTI) reported Tuesday. The card was posted by lawyer Jagannath Rao in the eastern town of Berehampur on March 3, 1948, less than a year after India ended two centuries of British colonial rule. It was addressed to Saudagar Ayub Khan at Raulkonda town, now known as Bhanjanagar, about 80 kilometres away. It reached the destination on Oct. 7 this year — effectively covering an average of around four metres a day during its marathon journey. The postcard carried a stamp of King George V. PTI said both the sender and addressee "are no more." It did not specify what had caused the delay.

Scientists claim 'breakthrough' in alligator taming

BEIJING (AFP) — Scientists in eastern China's Anhui province have made a "breakthrough" in the taming of alligators, allowing them to perform daring stunts, the Xinhua News Agency reported Tuesday. After training adult alligators weighing 30 to 50 kilograms since the beginning of the year, the tainers can safely sleep "dance" and play fight with the animals, the official agency said. The specimens used, which normally inhabit the lower and middle reaches of the Yangtze River, are members of a first-class protected species in China. The number of alligators in the country has risen from 500 ten years ago to some 5,000, it said. The taming work is being done at an alligator breeding research centre established in 1983.

Actor Dirk Bogarde suffers stroke

LONDON (R) — Sir Dirk Bogarde, one of Britain's leading film actors, then suffered a stroke on Tuesday. The actor, 75, was in the city for a performance at the Royal Opera House. He was taken to hospital and is expected to make a full recovery. Bogarde, who has been married to his wife, actress Joan Collins, since 1970, has a long career in film and television. He is best known for his role as John St. John in the 1955 film "The Third Man".

Italy to encourage teaching of pop music

TURIN, Italy (R) — The Italian government will encourage the teaching of pop music in schools. The move is part of a new curriculum for the 1997-98 school year. The government wants to encourage students to appreciate the cultural and artistic value of popular music. The new curriculum will include lessons on the history and development of pop music, as well as on the work of Italian pop singers. The government also wants to encourage schools to organize concerts and other events featuring pop music.

Better late than never...

Scientists' breakthrough on alligator

Scientists have made a breakthrough in understanding the behavior of alligators. The discovery was made by a team of researchers from the University of Florida. They found that alligators have a complex social structure and that they are capable of forming long-term relationships. The researchers also found that alligators are capable of learning from experience and that they can adapt to changing environments. This discovery is important because it helps us to understand the behavior of alligators and to protect them from extinction.

World News

Japan poll gives first hint of LDP win

TOKYO (R) — A major opinion poll forecast for the first time Tuesday that Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) could win an outright majority in Japan's general election Sunday.

The poll's finding after weeks of forecasts that no party would win a majority signalled a possible end to two years of LDP-led coalition rule in Japan.

The poll of 150,000 voters conducted by the business daily Nihon Keizai Shimbun at the weekend showed the LDP was likely to have a simple majority of 251 seats, and possibly more, in the 500-seat lower house of parliament.

Such a result would return the Conservative LDP to the position of sole power it held for nearly four decades until the last election in 1993 ousted it from power and ushered in a period of revolving-door coalition rule.

The LDP held 211 lower house seats when parliament was dissolved earlier this month. It ruled in coalition with the Socialists and the Sakigake Party, an LDP splinter group.

The poll found voters appeared to be turning against Japan's main opposition group, Shinshinto (the New Frontier Party), which it said would struggle to maintain its present number of 160 seats.

The Democratic Party, formed only last month by defectors from the two smaller parties that were in the ruling coalition, was doing well and could win 52 seats, the poll said.

Sunday's election will be the first held under a new electoral system in which 300 members of the lower house will be chosen in single-seat constituencies, while 200 will be elected through proportional representation decided by party strength.

A record 1,503 candidates are running.

If the poll result is borne out, it would mark a victory for Mr. Hashimoto in his determination to stick with an unpopular plan to increase the current three-per cent sales tax to five per cent from April.

Shinshinto leader Ichiro Ozawa has tried to woo voters with promises of a cut in income tax and a pledge to delay a rise in the sales tax for several years.

Political analysts said the apparent late surge by the LDP indicated that the organisational strength of the party was still intact despite the past three years of turmoil.

They said voters might also be deciding that the time had come to return to strong and undivided leadership to tackle the problem of the country's sluggish economic growth.

Populist N. Zealand leader could swing right or left

WELLINGTON (R) — Populist New Zealand first leader Winston Peters kept the country guessing Tuesday by offering equal odds on a coalition deal with the right or left.

The charismatic Maori politician, breaking virtual silence since Saturday's inconclusive election, said the chances of teaming up with the Conservative National Party or centre-left Labour were about even.

He said his party would negotiate with both sides, and it would not necessarily be harmful if the process dragged on until Christmas.

"It's better to take time to get it right," he said.

National, in power since 1990, won 53 seats together with its allies and remains in power as a caretaker government until a new coalition is formed. Labour and the left-wing alliance won a total of 50 seats.

Both the main parties have declared their aim of forming a government with support from New Zealand's 17 MPs. Peters has said he expects a "bidding war" over policy.

The new parliament is due to meet by Dec. 13. If no stable government can be formed, new elections would eventually be required.

Mr. Peters said he would be negotiating with National and Labour at about the same time in what he called a "dual negotiating process." He expected talks to start next week.

"We are ready to go," Mr. Peters said.

"We have a political system, a new one, and we intend and are determined to make it work. We want to secure an outcome that builds a strong export-led economy and addresses the outstanding social problems that are affecting New Zealand."

He said his priorities would be to uplift the underclass, give every child the education and healthcare needed to prepare them for life, treat the elderly fairly and attack a crisis in the mental health system.

New Zealand first won 13 per cent of the vote at the election, but was drawing 30 per cent in February after promising to cut immigration to the bone. Mr. Peters has denied targeting Asian immigrants.

Asked what message he had for Asians concerned about his party's position, Mr. Peters said they should examine the immigration policies of Asian countries.

"If they find a more liberal one than New Zealand's, let me know what it is," he said.

Mr. Peters pleaded for patience and calm from the financial markets, but said the New Zealand currency was too high for an export-led recovery — a comment which immediately provoked a sell-down.

He criticised the central bank policies of both National and Labour and said the current inflation target of zero to two per cent was no longer "respectable."

Madonna becomes a mother

LOS ANGELES (R) — Pop Star Madonna, whose often outrageous sexuality has been a staple of her climb to pop-culture stardom, celebrated the more traditional role of motherhood Monday.

She gave birth to a six-pound, nine-ounce (2.97 kilos) baby girl, named Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon, her publicist Liz Rosenberg said.

She said the "healthy baby girl" was born at 4:01 p.m. (2301 GMT) at the Good Samaritan Hospital in Los Angeles.

"Mother Madonna Ciccone, father Carlos Leon and their daughter are all resting comfortably," she said in a statement. "We would like to thank everyone for their kind wishes."

Ms. Rosenberg added that there would be "absolutely" no further information released and declined to say whether the birth was natural or by caesarean-section.

It is the first child for Madonna, 38. The father, Cuban-born Carlos Leon, 30, is a personal trainer to the pop singer and actress. They have not said if they will marry.

"He's not a movie star, you know. Everyone doesn't have to be. He's the man in her life and they met about a year and a half ago in New York," Ms. Rosenberg said at the time the pregnancy was announced in April while Madonna was filming "Evita" in Budapest, Hungary.

Earlier Madonna said half-jokingly on television that she planned to find a suitable candidate for "the fatherhood gig" by taking out a personal ad.

But she did not use Leon as a "stud service," she says in November's Vanity Fair magazine and did not get pregnant for "shock value."

"I realise that these are all comments made by persons who cannot live with the idea that something good is happening to me," the Michigan-born entertainer said.

In an interview with a Colombian newspaper this summer, Madonna said she hoped to raise her child in her religion as "a good Catholic," and had not yet decided whether to marry the father of her child.

"I don't know. I love Juan Carlos but that doesn't



Pop star Madonna performs Best Original Song nominee Sooner Or Later from Dick Tracy at Academy Awards. Madonna gave birth to a 2.97 kilogramme girl named Lourdes Maria Ciccone Leon at the Hospital of Good Samaritans in Los Angeles Monday. The child's father is Carlos Leon, her personal physical trainer (Reuter photo)

mean that I'm going to marry him," she told El Tiempo.

Asked why she had decided to have his baby, she said: "I have to work for someone in life. I needed something that's mine that I can be proud of."

Asked about rumours of her alleged lesbian love affairs, the flamboyant pop star told the newspaper "the funny thing is I don't like women. What really drives me crazy are men."

Her fame is founded on a string of hits but the notoriety that explains much of her runaway success rests unapologetically on raunch — relentless bodily exposure and a celebratory invocation of sex in various forms.

Madonna Veronica Louise Ciccone had flings with several Hollywood stars, including Warren Beatty, and was married to actor/director Sean Penn.

Flamboyant basketball star Dennis Rodman also wrote in graphic detail about his affair with Madonna, sparking a host of late-night TV jokes about her sexual appetite for athletes.

In 1992, she published a photo album called "Sex," packed with pictures of herself acknowledging aspects of sexual behaviour including sado-masochism and lesbianism. "Erotica," the record that followed, was laced with bedroom moaning.

Before these came Truth Or Dare (titled In Bed With Madonna in Europe), a no-holds-barred documentary of the singer on tour.

On record, she loved to shock. She performed her first hit, the suggestive Like A Virgin as a pouting bride Material Girl was a paean to empty materialism Papa Don't Preach about teen pregnancy and the video of Like A Prayer upset the Catholic Church with religious and sexual imagery.

Northern Ireland talks make breakthrough on agenda

BELFAST (R) — Northern Ireland's peace talks were finally set to get off the ground Tuesday after political parties made the first breakthrough in four months of wrangling and set a basic agenda.

The first substantive negotiation was to be held later in the day against a background of renewed tension across the British province caused by a week-old IRA guerrilla attack on Britain's army base at Lisburn, south of Belfast.

The talks group all Northern Ireland's pro-British and pro-Irish parties except Sinn Fein, excluded because of the failure of its IRA guerrilla allies to renew a 17-month ceasefire.

This means parties will discuss ways to get guerrilla groups to surrender their weapons while the Irish Republican Army, whose war against British rule lies at the heart of the conflict, is not represented.

Progress was seen deepening the isolation of Sinn Fein, whose IRA allies reject any preconditions for talks and refuse to discuss dismantling their arms stockpiles.

But it would enhance the credentials of two small political parties representing the IRA's arch-foes, loyalist groups who waged a 27-year war of terror against the Catholic Community to avenge IRA attacks, delegates said.

Loyalist militia have so far stuck by a two-year-old ceasefire and have not retaliated for last week's IRA bombing of the Lisburn Base, the first IRA attack in Northern Ireland itself for two years.

Their spokesmen in the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) and Ulster Democratic Party (UDP), drawn into the political process for the first time in years, have appealed to the guerrillas not to wreck fragile hopes of peace by avenging the IRA attack.

Delegates said the breakthrough was made possible by agreement between seven out of nine parties on how to tackle the surrender of arms held by guerrilla groups, the issue which has dogged an Anglo-Irish peace process for two years.

But the issue remained theoretical because both the IRA and loyalist guerrillas have said disarmament can only take place as part of an overall settlement reconciling pro-British unionist and Irish nationalists.

The parties will discuss how guerrilla groups could carry out so-called decommissioning of their arsenals in stages as the talks progress, an idea first floated by their U.S. chairman, former Senator George Mitchell.

"As a result of this agreement there will be substantive discussions on decommissioning at an early date," David Trimble, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), the main voice of continued British rule, told reporters.

The talks have been bogged down since they were launched by Britain and Ireland in June under the chairmanship of Mitchell, U.S. President Bill Clinton's Ireland adviser.

Unionist parties, which want the province to stay British, suspected Mitchell of favouring their Irish nationalist rival, the Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP).

They sought to rewrite the terms of his chairmanship and define the rules of procedure in moves which prevented any discussion at all of Northern Ireland's future until now.

Police seize disk in Berlusconi bugging case

ROME (R) — Italian police Monday seized a computer disk in which an anonymous person claimed to have made a bugging device found in former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's office, state television reported.

RAI television said that the floppy disk was sent to a Rome-based news agency by a man who said he was an electronics enthusiast who made recording devices.

The report said the sender saw media mogul Berlusconi display the matchbox-sized device on television and recognised one of his creations, allegedly commissioned by an unnamed deputy from the Lazio region about a month ago.

A lawyer for Mr. Berlusconi earlier made a formal complaint about the bug, whose discovery has caused uproar in Italy, while politicians prepared to debate the affair.

Lawyer Giuseppe De Luca deposited two pages of documents containing details of how the bug was found.

"The fact is very serious since, in my role as a parliamentarian, under Article 68 of the constitution I cannot be subjected to eavesdropping of any sort without the prior approval of the chamber of deputies," Mr. Berlusconi wrote.

The leaders of the various parties in the centre-left coalition Monday discussed the bugging issue with signs of disagreement on whether parliamentary debate should be limited to the bugging or amplified to discuss judicial activities.

Mr. Berlusconi, whose global business empire includes a controlling interest in Italy's three main private television stations, told a news conference in Rome Monday that a sweep of his office had detected the bug Wednesday.

The revelation sparked immediate outrage across the parliamentary divide.

Disgraced former Socialist Prime Minister Bettino Craxi meanwhile declared in a statement issued in Tunisia, where he is a fugitive, that the affair was merely the "latest link in a chain of illegality."

Mr. De Luca said Mr. Berlusconi had yet to hand over the bug, described by some experts as amateurish, and had "no specific suspicions in any particular direction" about who planted it.

Referring to the possibility of "deviant offshoots" of official bodies being responsible for the device, Mr. De Luca said it was inconceivable to think of "a serious institution violating a principle of democratic law."

Taiwan nuclear power plant sparks parliament clashes

TAIPEI (AFP) — Thousands of opponents and supporters of a controversial nuclear power plant in Taiwan clashed outside parliament Tuesday while MPs debated the assembly to stop Premier Lien Chan getting in.

Mr. Lien accused the opposition Democratic Progressive Party of attempting to undermine democracy by stopping him getting to debate the \$6.4 billion project.

Around 7,000 anti-nuclear activists, who shouted "get lost, you murderers," challenged 13,000 supporters of the power plant massed outside parliament.

More than 5,000 police were used to separate rival groups as the demonstration degenerated into fights.

Some anti-nuclear activists chased their rivals at the end of the protest. A pile of yellow caps worn by nuclear supporters was burned.

There were also clashes at the site of the proposed plant at Kungliao, in Taipei county as police stopped activists from entering to sabotage ground work.

The premier was surrounded by a wall of security guards and police as he forced his way through protesters to get to parliament.

When he was unable to get through the parliament gate because of the opposition MPs he angrily returned to his car and gave a thumbs down sign to the MPs. In Taiwan such a gesture is considered derogatory.

Shouting "Lien Chan, get lost," the 30 DPP deputies, wearing headbands with anti-nuclear slogans, sat in front of a side gate into parliament, holding hands to block Mr. Lien.

Mr. Lien described the action of the 30 DPP deputies as "a dark moment for the development of democratic politics," according to government spokesman Su Chi.

Some 200 DPP officials, led by Chairman Hsu Hsin-Liang, waited at other gates for Mr. Lien in case he went to them. The ruling Kuomintang (KMT) "is irresponsible, ignoring the safety of the public," Hsu said.

"The building of the nuclear power plant is a major government policy and the



Taiwan's Vice President and Premier Lien Chan gives a 'thumbs down' sign just before entering his car to leave the parliament Tuesday. Mr. Lien, who was scheduled to appear before the parliament in support for Taiwan's fourth nuclear power plant project, was prevented from entering the parliament building by a blockade of opposition legislators who oppose the project (Reuter photo)

general public is concerned about it. The premier has the right and obligation to address parliament and debate such a policy," Su quoted Lien as saying.

Mr. Lien, who is also vice president, said he should get respect from parliament.

"Only reason, not violence, can convince others," he was quoted as saying in criticizing the MPs.

Mr. Lien was to give a speech highlighting the need for a fourth nuclear plant on the national island because of the risk of shortages. The opposition overturned the project in parliament in May. But the cabinet has asked for this to be reversed.

Under the parliament regulations, the premier must address MPs on a case he wants reversed.

After boycotts by opposition MPs of the nuclear review debate, the speaker Liu Sung-fan announced

that parliament will move to a vote on the project without further debate Friday. If two thirds of the 164-seat assembly vote against the 2,700 Megawatt plant, Mr. Lien must fall in line with the decision or resign.

Despite the parliamentary defeat in May, the Taiwan Power Company (Taipower) went ahead and awarded a \$1.79 billion contract to U.S.-based general electric to supply a reactor and other equipment for the plant.

Taipower said in a statement Tuesday, calling for support from KMT MPs, it has already spent 6.1 billion Taiwan dollars (\$221 million) over the past decade on the project.

It said it will also create an international dispute if parliament kills the project since GE has already been contracted to build the reactor.

Moscow still rules out independence for Chechnya, but rebel leader Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev has said repeatedly he will not give up the separatist struggle.

A pro-Moscow government which had run the province since the start of conflict has been sidelined by the peace deal and its leader Doku Zavgayev is not involved in the latest rounds of negotiations between Moscow and the separatists.

Chechnya to hold local polls in January

MOSCOW (Agencies) — The separatist Chechen leadership, retaking effective control of the breakaway province as Russian troops withdraw under a peace deal, plans to hold local elections next January, Interfax News Agency said Tuesday.

Interfax also said the separatists, evidently without Moscow's approval, had finalised the line up of a "coalition government" in Chechnya, but it gave no details.

Interfax said the poll decision had been taken at a meeting of top rebel commanders late Monday. It did not make clear whether the polls would simply elect local councils in Chechen towns and villages or would choose a national leader as well.

Moscow and the rebels struck a peace deal for the region on Aug. 31 under which Russia agreed to withdraw its forces in exchange for postponing any decision of the region's future political status for five years.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

الصحف الجريدة الأردنية المستقلة المنشورة بالإنجليزية من قبل المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. تأسست 1975.

Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 6843111, 6996334

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays. Subscription and advertising rates are available from the Jordan Times advertising department.

Waiting for Netanyahu

IT IS self-evident that His Majesty King Hussein's visit to Jericho yesterday was intended to bolster Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's bargaining position with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu not only on the timing and whereabouts of redeployment in Hebron but on all outstanding issues in the Palestinian-Israeli track of negotiations as well. But in the process His Majesty also wanted to bolster the talks themselves since their success can only be assured by sound and equal partnership between the two negotiating sides.

No doubt, the King wanted to drive home a clear, two-pronged message to Mr. Netanyahu. First and foremost, the Israeli government should understand that the Palestinian cause is no less a Jordanian one as well; secondly, that Israel should never miscalculate in supposing that it can pursue peace with one Arab party and frustrate it with another, all at the same time. "Your cause is ours," the Monarch unequivocally told Mr. Arafat during the Palestinian leader's visit to Amman on Monday and afterwards.

Throwing Jordan's weight behind the Palestinians especially during these trying times is not redundant nor is it a new game being played in town. Helping the Israelis and the Palestinians reach an equitable settlement is in Jordan's best strategic interests, over and above the fact that it is necessary and essential for paving the way to a brighter future for all peoples in the region.

The stalemate over the redeployment of Israeli forces out of Hebron, though it has acquired a new sense of urgency because its perpetuation could break the whole peace effort, is but a test of the resolve and commitment to what has to follow afterwards. Jordan's determined intervention at this point is not without a good cause, therefore.

The Hebron issue has become a litmus test for the entire direction of the peace process and the symbol of its success or failure.

It can be argued that the Israeli prime minister does not comprehend the full implications of failure in the negotiations on Hebron. But if he does, he is not doing enough to avert what might otherwise turn into a very serious crisis.

If the King's visit to Jericho yesterday and his intensive talks with the Palestinian president over the past two days have not impressed upon the Israelis the seriousness of the situation we do not know what will and at what price there will be progress in the months and years ahead.

We, however, continue to hope, like all peace-loving people in the region do, that the "pleasant surprise" that Netanyahu promised during the Washington summit would come soon. The situation in the Palestinian territories, as the Israeli media tells us, is very volatile. And if the current Palestinian-Israeli talks did not produce positive results soon then we are all heading towards the abyss.

It is now really up to Netanyahu and his government to demonstrate that they are as keen as His Majesty the King and the Palestinian president on saving the peace process and the people of the region from the horrors of a renewed conflict.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE PALESTINIANS and the Jordanians have a common interest in stimulating the peace process and achieving a lasting settlement as they face a common destiny, said Sultan Al Hattab, a writer for Al Ra'i, in commenting on President Yasser Arafat's visit to Amman. The two sides are having excellent relations, which must be constantly strengthened in order to confront the Israeli ambitions in their region, he stressed. The Palestinians and the Jordanians have no alternative but to unite and the two countries must take the initiative in reorganizing a complete unity between them and the leaderships on both sides of the river. Jordan should respond favourably to this demand, said the writer. Together, the Jordanians and the Palestinians constitute a major force that could exercise pressure on Israel to live up to the requirements of peace and they can together chart a strategy designed to safeguard the holy places and restore the Arab homeland in Palestine, he continued. The Jordanian and Palestinian people look to their leaderships now to undertake practical and effective steps and coordinate their stands at all levels and under all circumstances if they want to achieve a breakthrough and guarantee the return of Arab rights in Palestine, he demanded. The writer said that the holy places and the Palestinian people's rights have proved to be a unifying factor which helps the two sides to maintain their endeavours towards a lasting peace.

KHAIIRI MANSOUR, a writer for Al Dustour, bitterly criticised the Islamic fundamentalists of Algeria for their continued attacks on the civilian population and the murder of the innocent people. We can understand the criminal act committed by a Zionist extremist who opened fire on the worshippers in a Hebron mosque, killing many of the Arabs there, as he is an enemy of the Muslims, but one can never understand the fundamentalists' attack on the worshippers lying in prayer at an Algerian mosque. The writer said that these groups which exploit Islam as a cover for their criminal actions are indeed distorting the image of the Islamic faith and committing atrocities in the name of Islam. The murder of innocent children and worshippers in Algeria can never help the criminals achieve any goal but make the fundamentalists equal to Zionist Goldstein who murdered the worshippers in the Palestinian mosque.

The Washington Watch

An Arab American poll: Clinton over Dole

By Dr. James Zogby

A NATIONAL poll of Arab American voters conducted during the first week of October reveals that the community supports President Bill Clinton's reelection.

A national poll shows Bill Clinton leading Bob Dole by 14 per cent, a margin equal to the president's standing among all voters. However, in the Midwestern and Eastern states, home to about two-thirds of the Arab American community, the president's lead climbs to 21 per cent. Clinton's lead is only 2 per cent among Arab Americans in the South.

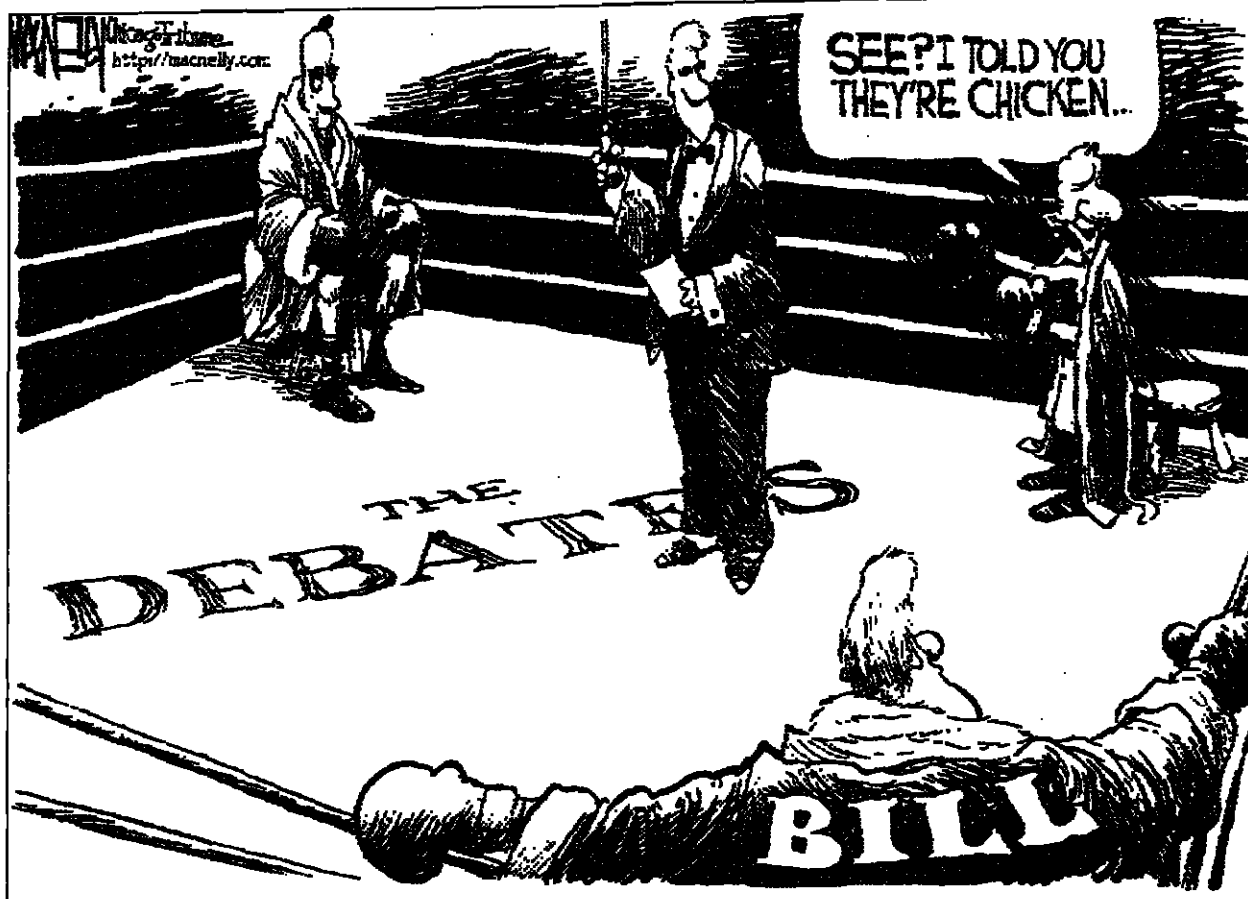
The poll, which was commissioned by Middle East Broadcasting Centre (MBC) and the Arab American Institute (AAI), tested Arab American attitudes about the presidential campaign in addition to several domestic and foreign policy issues.

Of equal importance, the poll also provided significant demographic information about the Arab American community and its internal composition. The result of over one year of testing and screening, the poll and the national data base of Arab American voters from which the poll was drawn provide important information about the community.

For example, the results indicate that 46 per cent of Arab Americans are Lebanese, 13 per cent are Palestinian, 11 per cent are Syrian, and 9 per cent are Egyptian.

The data base used for the poll also shows that 31 per cent of Arab Americans are Catholic, 29 per cent are Orthodox or Protestant Christian, and 29 per cent are Muslim.

In the poll, the percentage of Arab Americans who are born in the U.S. and those born overseas are roughly equal: the attitudes of both segments of the community



nevertheless display similar attitudes on most major issues. Both groups maintain strong feelings and ties to the Arab World. Seventy six per cent have family and friends in the Middle East and 92 per cent closely follow news about the Middle East.

Eighty eight per cent of all Arab Americans polled say that a candidate's position on Middle East issues is important in determining their vote on election day.

To some extent this concern about Middle East policy accounts for Arab American voter preference in the presidential race. Since 59 per cent agree that President Clinton has done a good job trying to keep the Middle East peace process on track, with only 33 per cent feeling he has not, it is not surprising that Arab Americans of Palestinian and Jordanian

descent would favour the president's reelection by a 54 per cent to 15 per cent margin.

On the other hand, with Arab American attitudes evenly divided on the question of whether "U.S. policy has positively contributed to Lebanon's sovereignty" — 39 per cent to 42 per cent — it is not surprising that the president's lead among Lebanese and Syrian Americans is only 42 per cent to 41 per cent.

There are other "gaps" in the Arab American voter group that are similar to those among the rest of the American voting public. For example, there is a gender gap. Arab American women favour Bill Clinton over Bob Dole by 17.5 per cent, while the president's lead over Bob Dole among Arab American men is only 10 per cent. Among Arab Americans under 50 years

of age, the president's lead is a huge 50 per cent to 23.5 per cent, while among those over 50, the president is tied with Republican Bob Dole.

Other evidence that the attitudes of Arab American voters fit into the mainstream of the American voting public can be seen in the fact that the Arab Americans polled say that the most important issues for them in this year's election are education, crime, the drug problem and health care. They like the rest of U.S. voters, give the president the highest grades in dealing with education, crime and health care, but give Bob Dole the highest grade in dealing with the drug problem. They also rate Bob Dole as better than Bill Clinton in the areas of integrity and personal character.

When released, the

MBC/AAI poll received significant national press coverage. The entire one-hour press conference was repeated four times on C-SPAN, the nation's premiere political television channel. It also received extensive coverage on other television and radio programmes nationwide. The poll was also reported in newspapers and political newsletters across the U.S.

Arab Americans are a fast-growing ethnic constituency in the U.S. Their concentration in the key electoral states and major metropolitan centres in the U.S., coupled with their growing political effectiveness, have drawn attention to the community in this election year. In addition, as a bridge to a critical region of the world, the attitudes of Arab Americans are important to U.S. policy makers.

NATO expansion: Going through the motions

By Gwynne Dyer

FORMER GENERAL Alexander Lebed, Russian internal security chief and President Boris Yeltsin's likeliest successor, has moved a long way in a year.

Last year, he warned that if the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) expands to include Eastern European countries that were formerly Soviet allies, the sky would fall. "World War III will start. Civilised and uncivilised states will be destroyed, everybody and everything."

Even allowing for Russia's traditional fear of encirclement, that sounded rather unlikely, so NATO pressed on with its plans. And though Lebed toned his rhetoric down a bit once he was brought into Yeltsin's government last spring, he did not change course either. Talking to Russian journalists on October 1, he said: "Russia has something with which to oppose NATO's enlargement. They're rusty, but they're missiles all the same."

How different he sounded after his first official visit to NATO headquarters in Brussels on October 7: "It is NATO's business what NATO decides. Whatever NATO does, Russia is not going to go into hysterics. The main thing is not to hurry, or you may trip up."

Lebed was not dropping his disapproval of the expansion plan, but he was certainly signalling his willingness to make deals.

Are the Russians really going to accept NATO's expansion right up to their borders without spinning out? And is this new version of an old alliance what the world needs today?

NATO is now locked on course to bring an additional 60 million Europeans under its

nuclear umbrella. Details will be settled at a NATO foreign ministers' meeting in December, and Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia will be officially invited to begin negotiations for membership at a NATO summit meeting next summer. Formal accession is expected in April 1999, the alliance's fiftieth anniversary.

But why do they want to join NATO? How can they trust an alliance that repeatedly chickened out in Bosnia when confronted by nothing more daunting than poorly trained, frequently drunk Bosnian Serb troops whose military speciality was ethnic cleansing? And why are the new NATO recruits afraid of Russia anyway?

The Russian army, at the moment, is about as frightening as the Salvation Army.

On paper there are supposed to be 1.5 million Russians under arms, but Moscow admits this has fallen to a million, and the true figure may be much lower. Soldiers' pay is months in arrears, and many are so desperate that they are selling their weapons to get money for food. Lebed has been issuing warnings about possible mutinies, but the troops seem too demoralised even for that.

The military budget has fallen by 45 per cent in real terms since 1992, and the army's fighting ability is so low that Chechen guerrillas actually recaptured Grozny, the breakaway republic's capital, in the last round of fighting in Chechnya. They were then able to hold it against all Russian attempts to dislodge them.

As a means of projecting force abroad, the Russian armed forces are completely useless. The army needs 300 new tanks a year to replace old ones, but it gets

fewer than 60. Fighter pilots get only 10 or 20 hours of flight time a year, one-tenth of the amount needed to remain combat ready. The navy has not built a single nuclear-armed submarine in the past five years.

Russia is not dangerous, so why join NATO for protection from it? And even if Russia should rearm and turn nasty, do the Poles truly believe that NATO countries like Germany, Britain and the United States would really risk a nuclear war to save them?

Oddly enough, the Poles (and Czechs and Hungarians and Slovenes) do believe something like that. Or at least they think that NATO membership might force an aggressive Russia to think twice before attacking them.

There is certainly no guarantee. The Czechs remember being betrayed to Hitler sixty years ago by Western European countries that had promised to protect them. Poles, on the other hand, remember a promise that Britain and France made to protect them from Nazi aggression — and actually lived up to when Hitler invaded Poland in 1939. Nobody knows which way NATO would jump in a crisis, but joining it is cheap insurance.

This view is shared by the other Eastern European states that will not be receiving invitations to join NATO next year. Slovakia and Croatia were rejected because they are drifting perilously close to dictatorship. Romania and Bulgaria are too unpredictable. Former Soviet republics — even Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, who would desperately like to join — are out of the question: Moscow would go crazy. But NATO thinks it can get away with four new mem-

So there will be a very limited expansion of the alliance. Moscow will be mollified with promises that neither nuclear weapons nor foreign troops will be stationed on the territory of the new members. Other Eastern European countries will be offered all sorts of symbolic associations with NATO, but nothing concrete.

To sweeten the pill further, NATO will negotiate a "NATO and Russia Charter" giving the Russians a privileged role in shaping political and military decisions in Europe. But that charter will not be signed before

NATO's expansion is agreed, lest Moscow try to veto it. And everybody will hope that the Russian parliament does not get so upset that it cancels or refuses to ratify existing arms limitation treaties like START II.

Is all this strictly necessary? Probably not. Will Russia be so angered that it retaliates by kicking over the whole structure of European security treaties? On the evidence of Lebed's shifting position, probably not.

And will Europe be a safer and happier place when it is all done? Probably not.

LETTERS

Mix-up captions

To the Editor:

WITH GREAT interest I have taken note of your article about the elections in Austria. "Austrians flock to far-right fold in Europarlament polls" (Jordan Times, Oct. 15, 1996) which gives a detailed analysis of the political situation in our country based on the results of this ballot. However, something went wrong with the caption to the photograph of the article, which reads as follows: "Ursula Stenzel, top candidate of the conservative People's Party (OeVP) in a European parliament looks at party leader Foreign Minister Wolfgang Schuessel (right) at the party's headquarters Sunday."

This could not be because Stenzel is a lady, and in the picture there are two men. The persons really shown in the photo are Austrian's Federal Chancellor Franz Vranitzky (left) and the chairman of the Austrian Freedom Party Joerg Haider (right).

Dr. Michael Stigelbauer,
Ambassador,
Amman.

Editor's note: The Jordan Times apologises for the error, which resulted from mixing up two captions on different photos we received by wire on the elections in Austria.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

IT
OCCURRED
TO ME

Something for nothing

By Ali Kassab

Not very long ago, I happened to be chatting with a friend of mine who is a lecturer at one of Jordan's many universities. Purely as an idle exercise intended to stop the day from getting long, we decided to apply our minds jointly to the following question: If, instead of going to the United States, Einstein had come to Jordan and applied for a post at one of the Jordanian universities, how would his application have been received?

Upon studying the system of evaluating applications, and taking stock of Einstein's modest paper qualifications, which do not even include a tawjihi, we concluded that he would have been lucky to be employed as a laboratory technician. Not that I disapprove of our system of appointment; the fault here lies clearly with Einstein.

You see, man cannot live by physics alone. He needs faith as well. Einstein, notwithstanding his many merits, belongs to that group of misguided people who maintain that matter cannot be created nor destroyed. Matter, clearly, includes wealth; and if we tell Jordanians that they will not get a windfall out of the blue without their having done a stroke of work to earn it, we would be robbing them of one of their last vestiges of hope and faith.

Seriously speaking, winning the lottery is like seeing a ghost or an unidentified flying object. You always hear stories about people who have had encounters with one or the other, but you yourself never come across one, nor across anyone who has seen such an entity. Nevertheless, you can hardly throw a brick in Amman without it hitting someone selling lottery tickets. Presumably, people are willing to part with their hard-earned money to buy these tickets in sufficient quantities to keep all these vendors alive and in the same trade.

To be sure, Jordan is not the only country in the world that has a lottery system; but things do not stop there. The phenomenon permeates into all walks of economic activity. Banks, for instance, in their zeal to attract your custom, do not compete to offer you better services, nor more facilities. Instead, they offer you the chance to get something for nothing, in the form of a monthly or even a bimonthly draw on all savings accounts, for a prize of several thousand dinars.

Not to be considered inactive, supermarkets have moved in to do their bit. They offer you golden cards which entitle you not to a price reduction in return for being a faithful customer, as they do in all other parts of the world, but to a regular lottery draw.

This peculiar fascination with gaining something for nothing cannot be entirely fortuitous. It really merits deeper study and analysis; but merely as a passing thought, could it be an indication that Jordanians have given up on the notion of honest endeavour reaping adequate rewards?

IT OCCURRED TO ME

Something for nothing

By Ali Kassab

Not very long ago I happened to be chatting with a friend of mine who is a lecturer at one of Jordan's many universities. Purely as an exercise intended to pass the day from getting long, we decided to apply our minds to the following question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received? Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received?

Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received? Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received?

Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received? Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received?

Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received? Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received?

Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received? Upon finding the answer, we decided to take up another question: If instead of going to the United States, Jordan had come to Jordan and applied for post-graduate studies, how would his application have been received?

NEWS IN BRIEF

Arab-Israeli MK lobbies for Jerusalem

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Arab member of Knesset (MK) announced Tuesday the creation of an organisation to lobby for making East Jerusalem the capital of a future independent Palestinian state. Taleb Al Sana, a member of the Knesset from the United Arab List, said his lobbying group included other legislators from his party, the communist Hadash group, the left-wing Meretz Party and two Arab deputies from the Labour Party. "Our goal is to counter efforts by the government of (Prime Minister) Benjamin Netanyahu to wipe out the Arab character of East Jerusalem," Mr. Sana told Israel Radio.

Israelis shoot Rafah 'infiltrator'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israeli soldiers shot and wounded a Palestinian man trying to sneak into the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the army said Tuesday. The man was shot and wounded in the leg late Monday after he climbed over a barbed-wire fence near the Israeli-controlled Rafah crossing into the Gaza Strip from Egypt, the spokesman said. He said Israeli soldiers had ordered the man to halt and opened fire when he paid them no heed. Rafah was the scene of some of the heaviest fighting when clashes erupted late last month between Israeli soldiers and Palestinian police. One Egyptian officer was killed by a stray bullet during the unrest.

Israel eases Bethlehem curbs

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — Israel on Tuesday eased a ban on its citizens travelling to Bethlehem, notably allowing Israeli bus drivers to bring tourists to the town's Christian holy sites. Officials in the Palestinian-controlled West Bank town had complained angrily that a three-week-old army ban on Israelis entering Bethlehem had severely cut into tourism revenue which is a mainstay of the local economy. Israel declared Bethlehem a closed military zone following the wave of Israeli-Palestinian clashes late last month. Since then, Israeli tour groups have had to drop foreign tourists off at an Israeli army checkpoint at the town's entrance, leaving them a hike of about two kilometres to the Church of the Nativity. On Tuesday, an army spokesman announced that Israeli bus drivers and tour guides accompanying foreign tourists would be allowed into Bethlehem, but the city remains off limits to other Israeli citizens.

New Kuwaiti cabinet announced

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait's crown prince and prime minister, Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, announced a new 14-member cabinet on Tuesday with new defence, interior and oil ministers. The new cabinet includes many previous appointees and consists of four members of parliament (MPs) and 10 other people. The selection of the new cabinet, which comes after elections to the 50-seat national assembly, left the foreign affairs, finance and information portfolios unchanged. They were held by members of the ruling family. Among the newcomers to the cabinet were two ruling family members, Sheikh Salim Sabah Al Sabah who took the defence portfolio, and Sheikh Mohamed Khalid Al Hamad Al Sabah, who will head the interior ministry. Essa Mohammed Al Majeidi, another newcomer who is not an MP, was appointed oil minister. The previous cabinet had 16 ministers.

Zeroual begins 5-country trip

PARIS (R) — Algerian President Liamine Zeroual on Tuesday left Algiers for Bahrain, his first leg of a tour that will take him to China, Vietnam and Qatar, the official Algerian news agency APS said. Mr. Zeroual's visit to Bahrain, at the invitation of Emir Sheikh Isa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, would be the first such visit by an Algerian president. Algeria's cooperation with Bahrain and its fellow Gulf Cooperation Council member Qatar has been limited. Economic relations between Algeria and Qatar have only extended to the hiring of some Algerian gas and oil experts.

Turkey says 57 Kurd rebels killed

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Turkish security officials said on Tuesday that government forces had killed 57 Kurdish rebels in separate clashes in the last three days. The regional governor's office in the city of Diyarbakir said in a statement that the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels had died in fighting in the provinces of Hakkari, Bitlis, Diyarbakir, Tunceli and Bingol. The statement gave no details of any security forces casualties. More than 20,000 people have died in 12 years of conflict between troops and the rebels, fighting for Kurdish self-rule in the southeast.

Egyptian tries to storm U.S. embassy

CAIRO (AFP) — A mentally deranged Egyptian man tried to force his way into the U.S. embassy here Tuesday to protest the Middle East peace policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, police said. Abdul Aziz Hassan Surur, 52, who was unarmed, fought with guards as he demanded to be allowed in to the embassy in Cairo's Garden City residential neighbourhood to meet with diplomats. "He wanted U.S. diplomats to intervene with the Israeli authorities, and namely the Israeli prime minister, to pressure them to continue with the peace process, lift a blockade of Palestinian territories and close a tunnel" near Islamic holy sites in Jerusalem, a police source said. The man was quickly subdued and taken to a local police station. Relatives said the man had been interned in a psychiatric hospital after he was sacked from his job as a researcher at the ministry of supplies, and had only recently been released.

Iriani visits Jeddah with message

JEDDAH (AFP) — Yemeni Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Iriani met Tuesday with Saudi Defence Minister Prince Sultan and handed him a message about demarcating their desert border, a Yemeni diplomat said. The message from Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh focused on "bilateral relations and the question of demarcating their common borders," the diplomat said. Mr. Iriani's brief visit Tuesday to the Red Sea port city of Jeddah came just a week after Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben travelled to Yemen. Mr. Saleh said during the last visit that he hoped to reach a mutually satisfactory agreement with Saudi Arabia on the question of demarcating the border. In 1995, Sanaa and Riyadh signed an agreement in principle which assigned the provinces of Najran, Assir and Jizan to Saudi Arabia and called for demarcating the frontier as well as normalising relations. The three provinces had been periodically subject to dispute for 60 years.



KING VISITS JERICHO: His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat at a Palestinian guard of honour mounted at the outset of the King's visit to Jericho on Tuesday and (right) the King meets with Palestinian officers in the self-rule town (Petra photos)



Kurdish feud shapes up as Iran-Iraq proxy conflict

ZAKHO (R) — A decades-old feud between two Kurdish factions in the remote peaks and valleys of northern Iraq is shaping up as a shadowy war of proxy between Baghdad and Tehran with an anxious Washington waiting in the wings. Iran and Iraq, still not reconciled since the end of an eight-year war between them in 1988, have taken sides in one way or another in the Kurdish struggle — the origins of which few of today's combatants are old enough to remember. Kurdish militia leader Massoud Barzani fought with Iraqi government forces in August to oust his Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) foes from the city of Erbil in August and then corner them in mountains near the Iranian border. PUK leader Jalal Talabani, a veteran player in the shifting alliances of Iraqi Kurdistan, hit back at the weekend. His fighters retook the region's main city Sulaimaniyah just as quickly as they lost it to Mr. Barzani's men a month ago. Mr. Barzani's group has cried foul, accusing Mr. Talabani of fleeing to Iran and returning with Iranian reinforcements. "The force he took with him was 1,500 or 2,000 men maximum," senior

Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) official Sami Abdul Rahman told Reuters on Monday. "Now the attacking force is about 15,000, mostly Iranians." Limited trade across the Iranian border has helped the PUK against two simultaneous embargoes — from President Saddam Hussein to the south and west and Mr. Barzani to the north — during tension between the Kurdish groups. Tehran denies supporting Talabani militarily. Diplomats in Baghdad say the Iraqi government would stay out of the squabble unless there was evidence of heavy Iranian involvement. Both Kurdish groups are ostensibly protected from Baghdad by a U.S.-led air force which has not taken part in the conflict. Baghdad's alliance with Mr. Barzani helped it regain some of the influence in the north that was lost to the West after the end of the 1991 Gulf war. Mr. Barzani says he was pushed into a temporary deal with Baghdad, which has killed several of his close relatives in the past, because of Iranian military aid to Mr. Talabani. A KDP delegation is due in Washington for talks with U.S. officials on Wednesday. Washington has urged the Kurds to steer clear of sup-

port from Iran and Iraq, as part of a U.S. policy of "dual containment" to keep either of the two neighbours from gaining an upper hand in regional disputes. "We are calling on both the PUK and the KDP to end the fighting," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said on Monday. "We hope both Iran and Iraq will stay out of the fighting," he added. Discarding ethnic solidarity to call in outside support is nothing new to Iraq's Kurds. Mr. Talabani joined with Baghdad against Mr. Barzani's father, Mullah Mustafa, in the 1960s but aligned with him in 1970 when Mullah Mustafa struck an autonomy deal with the central government. He broke away once again in 1975. The PUK embarked on unilateral autonomy talks with Baghdad in 1984 but they came to nothing. Both Kurdish factions helped Turkish forces fight a Turkish Kurd rebel group in northern Iraq in the early 1990s. "The history of Kurds is one of intrigues, plots, hostility and clash of loyalties," said a diplomat in Baghdad. "But above all they have proved to be their own worst enemies."

King Hussein pays landmark visit

(Continued from page 1)

ment, leads to the defusion of the crisis through achieving positive results. But despite the grim assessment Mr. Arafat made of the talks with the Israelis, there were Israeli and American talk of progress. Mr. Khasawneh also said that agreement has been reached on certain points but noted that differences remain on sensitive issues and the "talks are difficult and slow." He said there has been a narrowing of the gap on certain issues but more efforts are still needed to bring them closer. Palestinians have shared the assessment of the King's visit to the West Bank as a strong expression of support. So did Arab member of the Israeli Knesset Talab Sana, who told the Jordan Times that the visit and the firm stand of the King "show the Israelis that there is one and not many Arab parties to the peace talks."

(Continued from page 1)

Those who interfere in our internal affairs will suffer the same fate as the Russians, when they interfered in our affairs." Mr. Salanghi and Gen. Ruzi command "troops along the seam between Mr. Masood's and Gen. Dostum's forces north of Kabul. No formal military alliance has been announced but it is clear that neither Mr. Masood, a Tajik, nor Gen. Dostum, an Uzbek, is prepared to submit to a Pashtun-dominated Taliban hegemony. Gen. Dostum on Monday acknowledged the legitimacy of President Rabbani whom the Taliban ousted from Kabul. The Uzbek strongman is now bargaining from strength for his future role and responsibilities in a reconstituted government. His commanders have

Relative calm on Afghan battlefield

(Continued from page 1)

acknowledged providing some logistical support for Mr. Masood, but reporters have not found any evidence of joint military operations. However, Tuesday's meeting between Mr. Salanghi and Gen. Ruzi and the sudden presence of some Dostum troops and heavy weapons, including tanks and truck-mounted anti-aircraft guns and rocket launchers around Jaber os-Siraj, suggested that may be about to change. Pakistan has been accused of supporting the Taliban's two-year battle to oust Mr. Rabbani, a charge Islamabad denies. One of those fuelling the accusations — Pakistan's rival India — was preparing Tuesday for crisis talks on the Afghan situation with Iran. India still recognises Mr. Rabbani's government while Iran has been extremely critical of the Taliban and has been warned by the militia not to aid its rivals. Indian Foreign Ministry Joint Secretary Vivek Kachru said in New Delhi that Iran's Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati was expected to visit India for talks soon, though no date was set. In Kabul, Mr. Muttqi repeated a warning to Iran not to interfere in Afghanistan's internal affairs. "We have no problem with Iran but the Iranian authorities are making trouble and aggressing our borders," he said, calling on other countries to recognise the Taliban leadership. "Those who avoid recognising our Islamic government have no reason whatsoever not to do so," he said.

Gulf war

(Continued from page 1)

year, he replied: "By now it is too late to think we could make substantial payments by the end of the year. We are ready to start the payments as soon as the money is there. By the end of the year we would have issued awards for close to \$7 billion," he added. "When you look back at history, this has been the rule, never the exception. We have to adapt to realities." The commission, set up by the Security Council to compensate direct losses caused by Iraq's invasion and occupation of Kuwait in 1990-91, is processing claims from individuals, companies and governments against Baghdad worth an asserted \$200 billion. But the "oil-for-food deal"

under Resolution 986, which would allow Baghdad to sell \$2 billion of oil over six months to buy food and medicine, has been delayed — spoiling the commission's hopes to pay out awards to individual claimants. The Geneva-based body, which is due to receive 30 per cent of the revenue generated by the limited Iraqi oil sales, expected to get \$100 million a month from the deal.

Barzani fighters beef up Erbil defences

(Continued from page 1)

news agency. Asked if Turkey had launched a diplomatic initiative vis-a-vis Iran, Mrs. Ciller said: "We are following the issue, a dialogue is continuing (with Iran). Our initiatives are continuing within a dialogue." Shortly before Mrs. Ciller's statement, a KDP official told AFP that his group had asked Turkey to urge Iran to keep out of northern Iraq. "We would like Turkey to affect the position of Iran to keep out of Kurdish politics in Iraq," Faik Nerwi said. "We are trying to convince all our neighbours to keep out of the conflict." Sami Abdul Rahman, the KDP's deputy leader, had talks with Turkish diplomats here Monday before flying to Washington to discuss the latest developments in northern Iraq with U.S. officials. A KDP delegation arriving in Washington for talks with State Department officials later in the week also accused Iran of supporting the PUK and warned the meddling could spark a new Iran-Iraq war. Delegation member Hoshiyar Zebari said his faction will ask Washington to step up its mediation efforts to "contain the situation" and prevent an escalation in the fighting. Iran and the PUK have both denied the charges. "This Iranian involvement is our major concern," said Mr. Zebari. "Iran is there in full force and has intervened directly to dictate its own agenda. This could open a wider conflict and lead to an Iran-Iraq war in that region." U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry told reporters separately that Washington had "no information to confirm the presence of Iranian military forces in northern Iraq." The Washington Post on Tuesday quoted a U.S. official privy to intelligence reports as saying that Iran had provided weapons, ammunition, supplies and military advisers to the PUK. Iran and Iraq fought an eight-year war that ended in a ceasefire in 1988. The United States has urged the KDP and its rivals to stop fighting and to enter into talks on a power-sharing arrangement for northern Iraq. Mr. Zebari said Iraqi forces remained on the sidelines in the latest round of fighting but that "this Iranian presence gives them the temptation or the opportunity to move."

The meetings at the State Department were to follow up on talks held in Ankara on Sept. 18 between Mr. Barzani and Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs Robert Pelletreau. At that meeting, Mr. Barzani urged the United States to help stave off Saddam Hussein's influence in northern Iraq, according to senior U.S. officials. In a lightning counter-offensive since Sunday, PUK fighters have recaptured Sulaimaniyah and the surrounding areas and advanced toward Erbil after the KDP drove them east to the border with Iran last month. Mr. Talabani said he did not expect Iraqi forces to intervene. "The Iraqi leadership announced it had no intention to intervene and we hope it will respect this announcement and that it will remain neutral." The PUK chief said the central government had not stepped in because "Baghdad has assured itself there has been no Iranian involvement in the fighting, after it had been duped a first time by Barzani." Iraq also fears a U.S. reaction and does not want to get involved in fighting with the PUK, he added. Iraq rebuilt a surface-to-air missile network in southern Iraq within two weeks of the U.S. cruise missile attack to destroy it, the Washington Post reported on Tuesday. "It is the same basic (anti-aircraft missile system) that was there before the 30th of August 1996," an unidentified senior defence official told the newspaper. U.S. warships and planes launched 44 cruise missiles against the air defence system on Sept. 2 and 3. Since the attack, the Iraqis had not used the radar or their Soviet-made missiles, the Post quoted the official as saying. But it would take just "a flip of the switch" to turn on the targeting radar and create a threat to U.S. and allied military aircraft patrolling the no-fly zone in southern Iraq, according to the official. The newspaper said the official added that there was no indication on Baghdad's part "of an intent to challenge" aircraft policing the area off limits to Iraqi planes. After the U.S. strikes last month, the Clinton administration strongly warned Baghdad against rebuilding the fixed missile sites.

U.S., Israel reject Arafat's call

(Continued from page 1)

Hebron to discuss security arrangements. Formal negotiations were to have resumed Monday in the Egyptian resort of Taba. They were postponed once before at the request of Mr. Ross. The Taba talks were to begin Wednesday, Mr. Ross said. The State Department said the Israeli-Palestinian talks had made progress but "substantial differences" remain. "They have a long way to go," spokesman Nicholas Burns told reporters in Washington following a telephone conversation with Mr. Ross. Mr. Burns sought to lower optimistic expectations. "There's been much too much talk in the press of some kind of immediate positive outcome," he said. "Progress has been made, but substantial problems remain." The State Department also dismissed Mr. Arafat's proposal that U.S. troops be deployed in Hebron. "There are no plans to deploy U.S. troops to Israel or to Jericho or to Hebron or to Gaza. There are no plans whatsoever," he said. Asked why the United States would not consider the proposal, the spokesman said the Israelis and Palestinians are "going to have to live with each other" and "don't need the United States between them, physically on the ground."

UNCTAD: Asian Tigers' success can be replicated

GENEVA (AFP) — The export-fuelled industrialisation achieved by countries in East Asia, can be replicated by other developing countries provided they pursue the right policies and the North does not close its markets, a U.N. report has said.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said in its annual report for 1996, that the "Tiger" economies of South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore were today being joined by a "second tier" formed by Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand of "newly industrialising economies" (NIE).

The report said per capita income in the first four had grown on an average of almost 7.0 per cent a year over the past three decades. In the "second tier" countries, the average annual growth in the past decade has been 6.0 per cent, it said.

A "third tier" was now

emerging which included China.

The pattern known as the "flying geese development paradigm," in which Japan has traditionally taken the lead, was characterised by development "in waves" and also "a regional division of labour based on an industrial and locational hierarchy," the report said.

It said second tier NIE countries were today less reliant on trade with the North than were the "Tigers" because growing industrialisation in the South had opened up new possibilities for South-South investment and trade.

The report said the "slowdown in Japanese growth has been associated with a considerable relocation of production in the second tier NIEs," thus helping to develop their industrial infrastructure.

"For many developing countries, replicating East

Asia means achieving a rapid increase in their exports of labour-intensive manufactures. The report sees considerable room for expansion in this respect," UNCTAD said.

The report, presented here by UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero, proposed creating an international "marketing-cum-information agency" to help developing countries map out export strategies so as to avoid flooding the market with exports of low-skill products which would drive down prices.

It recommends that developing countries upgrade and diversify their exports into more skill-intensive, dynamic products in which their share of Northern markets is presently small.

However, the report admits that massive exports from developing countries could entail "serious problems" for economies in the North

affecting more than 12 per cent of jobs in the manufacturing sector.

If growth in the North continues to be sluggish, export-driven economies in the South could conquer more than 20 per cent of the market for manufactured consumer goods in the North, it said.

The counterpart would be a surge in northern exports of more sophisticated manufactures and modern services to the South, it said.

"With the depressed demand conditions and growing labour market problems which have characterised the North over the past 20 years, the scale of market penetration envisaged might trigger an intensification of protectionist pressures," the report warned.

It said that if the Multi-Fibre Agreement regulating world textile trade, was phased out as agreed in the

Uruguay Round of trade talks, developing countries could "triple" their exports of textiles and clothing to the North over the next 10 years. Only "a quarter" of the market would be left for northern producers.

"Greater South-South cooperation in trade could help overcome problems associated with inadequate growth of and access to markets in the North," the report went on.

UNCTAD said investments by the four Tigers in East Asia came to more than those of Japan. The share of ten Asian developing economies in world trade was now equal to that of the

European Union and the United States (18-19 per cent) and double that of Japan.

Exports among East Asian developing countries (\$213 billion) had almost caught up with their exports to the North (\$297 billion) UNCTAD said.

"The evidence thus suggests that there is a rapid process of integration taking place within the smaller countries of East Asia, a process in which even China is becoming involved to some extent," the report said.

But the report said success did not depend on market access alone. It said that in East Asia, "effective govern-

ment intervention" had been crucial in achieving rapid export growth.

"Government policies have played an important role in fostering East Asian regional integration, which could be characterised as a recycling of comparative advantage," UNCTAD said.

Referring to the "severe labour market problems which continue to beset many advanced industrial countries," UNCTAD said it "rejects the claim, which has become louder over the past year, that growing import penetration by developing countries of their domestic markets is to blame for these problems."

Netanyahu asks central bank to lower interest rate

TEL AVIV (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called on Bank of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel Monday to lower interest rates, a treasury official said.

"I am cutting the budget. Now I want you to cut interest rates," the official quoted Mr. Netanyahu as telling Dr. Frenkel.

The two men met in occupied Jerusalem Monday along with Finance Minister Dan Meridor, trade officials and senior industrialists.

"A budget cut and an interest rate cut have to be undertaken at the same time...The timing at this moment is good," the official, who attended the meeting, quoted Mr. Netanyahu as saying.

The remarks were the first time Mr. Netanyahu has openly criticised the Bank of Israel's interest rate policy. The central bank is due to announce interest rates for November at the end of the month.

The central bank under inflation hawk Dr. Frenkel has kept monetary policy

tight for several years. Dr. Frenkel has said he cannot substantially lower interest rates until the government tightens fiscal policy.

Israel plans to cut 3.2 per cent of spending in the 1997 budget but Mr. Netanyahu has said steeper cuts may be needed due to a shortfall in revenue. The cuts have yet to be approved by parliament.

Dr. Frenkel has called for even deeper cuts.

Industrialists have said high interest rates have artificially strengthened the shekel, which they maintain hurts exports and slows economic growth.

"The shekel has been frozen for three years... Tell me, are all of us besides you crazy?" industrialist Benny Gaon told Dr. Frenkel during the meeting.

In a later development, the prime minister's office denied a press report that it was preparing a secret plan to lower taxes by two to three per cent.

Moshe Lion, senior deputy director general at the prime minister's office, denied a report in the daily

Maariv that he was in charge of a team set up to find ways to lower taxes.

Avidor Lieberman, the powerful director general of the prime minister's office, was reported to be behind the initiative.

Prime Minister Netanyahu took office in June with a promise not to raise taxes. Israel's 1996 government budget deficit has been soaring above its target because tax revenues have been lower than forecast. In the first nine months of the year the deficit totalled 8.9 billion shekels against a 1996 target of 7.6 billion shekels.

Meanwhile, analysts said that the rift created between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Finance Minister Meridor over capital market reform has cast doubts on the government's ability to pass economic measures.

"If this is how the government makes decisions it is a major blow to its already damaged prestige and calls into doubt its ability to push through important economic measures, notably the 1997 budget," Pinchas Lan-

dau, senior columnist in the Globes economic daily told Reuters. "Meridor ought to resign."

The government envisages a 4.9 billion shekel (\$1.54 billion) cut, equal to 3.2 per cent of originally planned spending, in the 1997 budget to be submitted to parliament at the end of the month.

The provisional budget for 1996 is 172.8 billion shekels.

The proposal has aroused widespread opposition as critics say the cuts, including the raising of public transport prices and a reduction in child allowances, will hit low-income families hardest.

In the early hours of Monday morning Israel's cabinet adopted only in part the finance minister's proposal for capital market reform, postponing a decision on a politically-sensitive tax on savings of less than 10 years' maturity, which was a key component of the reform.

The capital market reforms are aimed at diverting short-term savings into long-term alternatives and to stimulate capital markets. Opponents of the tax say it is unwise to tax savings when national savings are falling.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.5386	0.6321	1.2667	112.27	1.3535	1529.30	1.7274	5.2040	
DE Mark	0.6495		0.4106	0.8223	72.91	0.8785	992.60	1.1216	3.3783
GB Sterling	1.5820	2.4347		2.0034	177.66	2.1412	2419.66	2.7331	8.2338
CHF Franc	0.7895	1.2147	0.4993		88.51	1.0679	1206.55	136.38	4.1057
JP Yen	0.0089	1.3707	0.5625	1.1276		1.2050	13.62	153.79	4.6332
CA Dollar	0.7388	1.1299	0.4875	0.9257	1.21		1125.29	1.2680	3.8263
IT Lira	0.0007	1.0062	0.4127	0.8827	1364.44	0.8842		11.28	3.3995
NL Guilder	0.5789	89.11	0.3655	73.31	64.94	0.7831	884.81		3.0109
FR Franc	0.1922	0.2959	0.1214	24.3324	21.55	0.2600	33.19	33.1900	

Energy		
Oil	Last	Previous
Brent	25.40	25.35
W. Texas	25.30	25.45
Bony	25.40	25.35
Dubai	22.32	22.00
UL Gas	227.00	227.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2687	0.4107	0.16852	0.33783	29.95
AE Dirham	0.2724	0.41959	0.17216	0.34822	30.5969
KW Dinar	3.3344	5.13611	2.10748	4.22654	374.532
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.408497	1.67645	3.36134	297.974
CY Pound	2.1297	3.2804	1.3454	2.6973	239.068

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (oz's)	381.1	381.6
Silver (oz's)	5.92	5.94
Platinum (oz's)	385	386
AL (3 Months)	1360	1361
CU (3 Months)	1957	1958
Zinc (3 Months)	1021	1022
Lead (3 Months)	748	751
NI (3 Months)	7120	7130

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)					
Period	3	6	12	18	24
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.23	5.35	5.50	5.53	5.67
GBP	5.78	5.84	5.95	5.90	6.31
JPY	0.34	0.35	0.38	0.50	0.48
DEM	3.00	3.02	3.02	3.10	3.09
FRF	3.37	3.46	3.53	3.56	3.60
CHF	1.48	1.55	1.55	1.43	1.60
ITL	8.15	7.96	7.75	7.56	7.43

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls		
New York	DOW JONES	6016.71	6.71	0.11	6044.29	6006.31	6010		
New York	S&P 500	702.59	-0.95	-0.14	708.07	701.56	703.54		
London	FT-SE 100	4050.8	12.1	0.3	4063.2	4043.4	4038.7		
Tel Aviv	NIKKEI 225	21429.93	-400.58	-1.81	21429.93	21084.8	21028.3		
Paris	CAC 40	2168.28	24.66	1.15	2176.45	2151.74	2143.82		
Frankfurt	DAX	2728.45	34.57	1.28	2728.45	2711.22	2693.89		

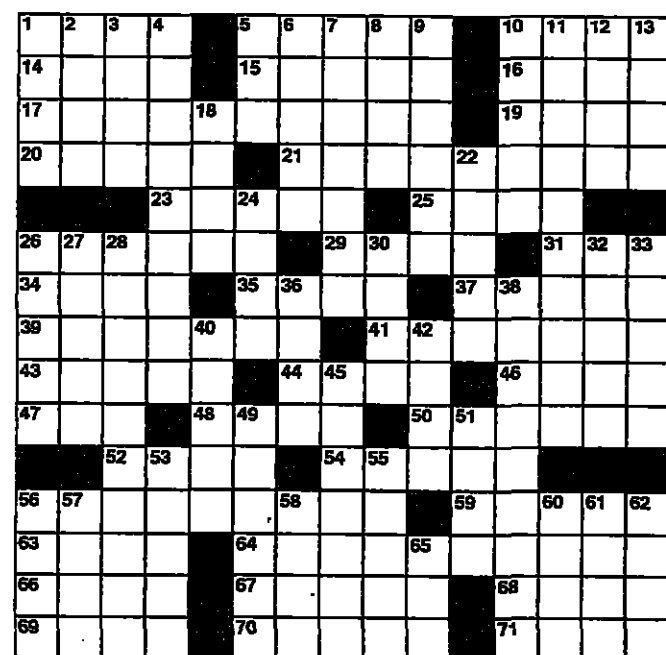
Energy		
Commodities	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	122.25	Spot
Cocoa (c/lbs)	1452	Spot
Sugar (c/lbs)	331.5	Spot
Wheat (c/lbs)	158	Spot
Soy (c/lbs)	21.32	Spot
Tea (c/lbs)	115	Spot
Barley (c/lbs)	2.52	Spot
Rice (c/lbs)	465	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1178	1.1231
DE Mark	0.462	0.4643
CHF Franc	0.5627	0.5655
FR Franc	0.1364	0.1371
JP Yen	0.632	0.6352
NL Guilder	0.4118	0.4139
IT Lira	0.464	0.4653

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS
- 1 Legerdemain
 - 5 Volcanic rocks
 - 10 Serene
 - 14 Naturalist John
 - 15 Upright
 - 16 Purview
 - 17 Fairly
 - 19 Sch. orgs.
 - 20 Actress Sharon
 - 21 Vessels for boiling
 - 23 Cagney's Oscar role
 - 25 Victim of whale obsession
 - 26 Layer
 - 29 Fictional plantation
 - 31 Punch
 - 34 Not quite right
 - 35 Part of G.B.S.
 - 37 — Vista, NM
 - 39 Livelihood
 - 41 Manifests
 - 43 Crept
 - 44 Wait
 - 46 Eye sore: var.
 - 47 Brain wave rec.
 - 48 — corner
 - 50 Obliterated
 - 52 Furthermore
 - 54 Ventured
 - 56 Olive stuffers
 - 59 Ferber and St. Vincent Millay
 - 63 Norse equivalent of Zeus
 - 64 Embodiment of a tingle
 - 66 Roll-top
 - 67 Monsters
 - 68 PA port
 - 69 Tennis divisions
 - 70 Endures
 - 71 Spanish lady



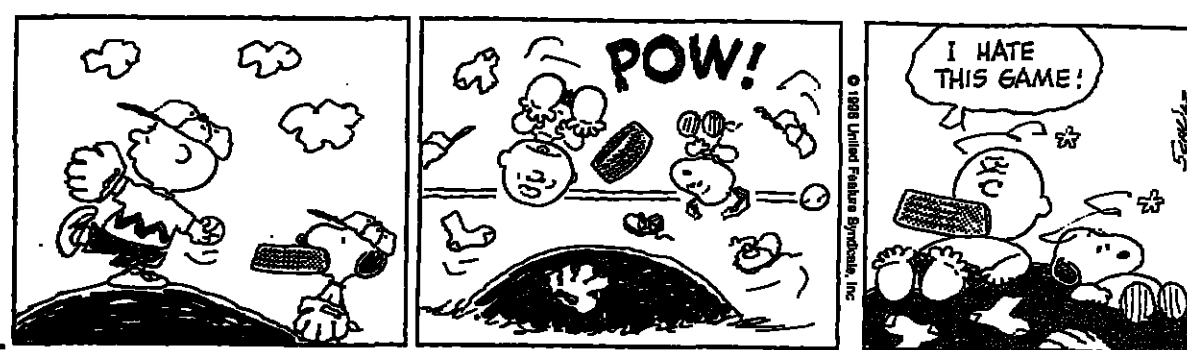
by Frederick T. Buhler

PIES	CARPE	THEM
ESSE	OLEIN	HEMI
DESPLAINE	OMIT	
ARETES	DRUB	IRE
LEN	STA	REIGN
PLATTE	BUGLE	
ASSAILER	AWAY	
TITLE	NAB	ORATE
ELEM	DEEPLY	
FOVEA	SELVES	
ERASE	TAR	SRO
ANN	ACTE	DASHER
WISE	ROCK	ISLAND
ENOS	ASHEN	ARTE
RENE	GEORG	PEER

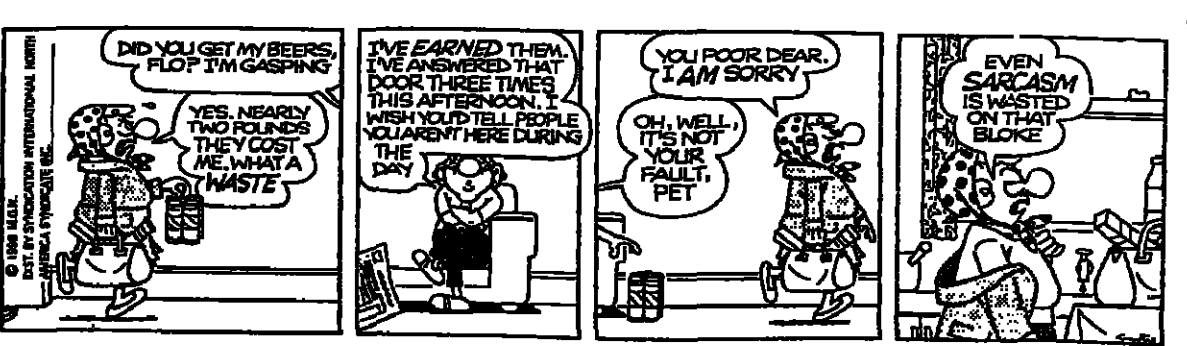
© 1996 Tribune Media Services, Inc. All rights reserved.

- DOWN
- 1 Large flightless birds
 - 2 Family circle member
 - 3 Part of RNA
 - 4 Main
 - 5 "Miserables"
 - 6 Betel nut source
 - 7 Hindu system of philosophy
 - 8 Legal rights gp.
 - 9 Like a groove cutter
 - 10 "It's A Wonderful Life" director
 - 11 Statues, e.g.
 - 12 Tilt
 - 13 Gather
 - 18 A very long time
 - 22 Abu
 - 24 Melange
 - 26 Become ineffective
 - 27 Winged
 - 28 One of the faithful?
 - 30 Inspired with reverence
 - 32 Keep — on
 - 33 Founded
 - 36 Goddess of youth
 - 38 Removed a burden
 - 40 Stop
 - 42 Swerve
 - 45 Sheltered
 - 49 Nomadic Asian tribesman
 - 51 Offshore ridge
 - 53 Couples'
 - 55 Positive attribute
 - 56 Seed vessels
 - 57 — fix
 - 58 Roman garb
 - 60 Famous fiddler
 - 61 A — American
 - 62 Mets' milieu
 - 65 Curve

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Put any new ideas to work today which help you to become more efficient in your routine career activities. Later this evening will be fine for you to discuss a new project which has been given.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) You wish to look more up-to-date today and you should see your barber or beautician and stylist. Use wisdom and instincts in dealing with difficult situations this evening and make the best of any adversity.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Study how to improve your home today so that everything becomes more ideal and functional there. Later this evening you can meet with close friends and have a good time out on the town for recreational activities.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You get a fine idea today how best to improve outside routine tasks which brings regular income to your residence. Tonight you can have a romantic time with your mate and spend some quality time with him or her.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is a good day today to study your status where practical affairs are concerned. Check to insure bills are paid and that you have enough money to cover all of your financial obligations for the days ahead.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Plan today how to improve your personal life and physical well-being and become more successful and peaceful. Later this evening will be good for seeing close friends and go to recreational activities for some fun.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) This is a good day today to handle matters you have delayed for sometime and soon they are behind you. Tonight you can go out on the town with your mate and have a wonderful time together and make this special.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Today is a good day to contact those persons you have not seen in a long time and strengthen the relationships. You can have a good time this evening with close friends at recreational activities which you have not done before.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) An early start in the outside world today can gain you the business and personal favours you need to be successful. This evening can be fine if you are careful while on the highway and do not get into any difficult situations.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You have to further study into a new plan of action today before you can make it work successfully. Later this evening can be fun for your loved ones if you participate in recreational activities which everyone will enjoy.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Be more concerned today with the business side of life and forget about being so gregarious for a while. Later this evening can be enjoyable for fellow associates if you are willing to put extra effort into your career activities.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Sit down to long conversations with fellow associates and cement better relations through long discussions. Rid yourself of friction with your mate and tonight can be enjoyable for you both in the days ahead.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline

**FOR YOUR
Advertisement
in
Jordan
Times
Call tel:
667171 ext. 223**

Ajax and Rangers limp into European battle

AMSTERDAM (R) — Ajax Amsterdam and Glasgow Rangers are both plagued by injuries as they prepare for Wednesday night's European Champions' League clash in Ajax's futuristic new stadium, the Arena.

Ajax coach Louis Van Gaal, who last week announced he would quit the club at the end of the season, has been without some of his best players all season, and has seen his side falter both at home and in Europe.

Captain Danny Blind and Peter Hoekstra are out long-term and Richard Witschge is only now beginning to recover from injury.

Both key strikers Patrick Kluivert and Finn Jari Litmanen are reported to be back doing light training with the squad.

Litmanen, the club's most prolific scorer in European competition with 19 goals, may play on Wednesday but Kluivert, still nursing a knee ligament injury, is unlikely to appear.

Rangers, reeling from a shock 2-1 defeat at the hands of Hibernian at the weekend, are similarly depleted.

Walter's Smith's side are short of attackers in particu-

lar, with Dutch striker Peter Van Vossen stretched off at the weekend, adding one more to a lengthy injury list. He is now doubtful to play against his former club.

Already out are Stephen Wright, Alan McLaren, David Robertson, Trevor Stephen, Ally McCoist and Gordon Durie, while Stuart McCall and Charlie Miller missed Saturday's game.

Danish striker Erik Bo Anderson is struggling to recover from a hamstring injury.

Van Vossen, who left Ajax 16 months ago, was back training with his old club last week on a trip back to the "They are still an impressive side despite all the injury problems," he said.

"They always play the same way and with the same system no matter what players come and go."

Smith was also cautious about writing Ajax off.

"I don't think they are in total turmoil as some people might be suggesting," he said. "They have injury problems and the Bosman ruling affected them during the summer."

"There hasn't been a better team in Europe over the past three or four years. I don't think, but the squad has now undergone a bit of

change which is inevitable."

Injuries have been only half the Ajax story this season with the core of the old squad decimated by transfers.

Nigerians Nwankwo Kanu and Finidi George, midfield Dynamo Edgar Davids and defender Michael Reiziger have all been tempted to Italy and Spain leaving gaps that have been hard to fill.

The result has been a dearth of goals — Ajax have scored just 10 in 10 league games, leaving them in sixth place.

In Europe Ajax have continued to struggle, losing at home to Grasshopper Zurich in their last Champions' League match.

Rangers have made a better start on the domestic front and currently top the Scottish premier division. Their weekend defeat by Hibs was their first league loss.

But their Champions' League campaign has started with defeats to both Grasshopper Zurich and Auxerre, result which leave them bottom of Group A.

Packers edge 49ers in over-time

GREEN BAY, Wisconsin (AFP) — Chris Jacke kicked the longest over-time field goal in National Football League history, a 53-yard effort here Monday that gave Green Bay a 23-20 triumph over San Francisco.

Jacke's fifth and longest field goal of the game came three minutes and 41 seconds into over-time and lifted the Packers to 6-1 with a victory over the 49ers in a showdown matchup of two expected Super Bowl contenders.

The 49ers led 17-6 at half-time but were shut down in the second half until Marquez Pope intercepted a Brett Favre pass to set up a Jeff Wilkins 28-yard field goal. That put San Francisco ahead 20-17 with 2:17 to play.

Green Bay responded with a 69-yard march in 94 seconds to set up Jacke's 31-yard field goal with eight seconds remaining to force over-time. His earlier kicks were from 30, 25 and 35 yards.

Jacke has made 17 of 26 field goal attempts from 50 yards or longer, the second-best percentage of such kicks in American football history.

Green Bay's Don Beebe caught 11 passes for a career-high 220 yards, the third-best total in Packer history.

Favre threw a club-record 61 passes, completing 28 for 395 yards despite a first-play injury to the right knee of his favorite receiver, Robert Brooks.

Elvis Grbac, starting at quarterback for San Francisco in place of injured Steve Young, threw a seven-yard touchdown to Jerry Rice to put the 49ers ahead 10-6 with 2:20 to play before half-time.

San Francisco defender Dana Stubblefield intercepted a Favre pass and returned it 15 yards to Green Bay's 28-yard line to set up a 13-yard Grbac-to-Rice touchdown toss 23 seconds before half-time.

Rice's scoring receptions extended his NFL-record career touchdown total to 161.

The 49ers, 4-2, fell into a share of their division lead with Carolina. They next play at home Sunday against Cincinnati. Green Bay is idle.



Alberto Tomba

Tomba may skip opening world cup races

ROME (R) — Alberto Tomba, returning to a favourite theme, was quoted on Tuesday as saying that the Alpine skiing world cup circuit should be scrapped.

Italian newspapers also quoted the world and Olympic champion as saying that he would skip the season's opening race in Austria and might also decide against travelling to the United States but would decide nearer the date.

"I have always said that the classics, the world championships and the Olympics were enough," the daily Gazzetta Dello Sport quoted Tomba as

telling reporters at an awards ceremony in the northern town of Biella on Monday.

Tomba, who said earlier this year that he had considered retiring after winning two gold medals at the Sierra Nevada world championships in February, has changed his training schedule and reduced his workload this season.

"I will decide later whether to start the season in the United States or at Madonna Di Campiglio," said Tomba, who has already committed himself to competing in the 1997 world championships in the Italian resort of Sestriere.

"I have done half as much training on snow as last year so I may delay my start as a result. I will do some trials at the end of the month to see how the motor is working," he said. "At the moment I should be about ready. I am probably faster but a bit less powerful and I have to see how my stamina shapes up," the Italian triple Olympic gold medalist said.

The season starts in Sölden, Austria on October 26-27 and then moves to Park City, Utah on November 21. Madonna Di Campiglio hosts a race on December 17.

Norwegian spills beans on Turkish delight

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Ronny Johnsen knows better than anyone about the Turkish love of blood and glory.

The Norwegian defender has given his new Manchester United teammates a valuable insight into the philosophy behind the latest Champions' League welcome they can expect in Istanbul on Wednesday against Fenerbahce.

"They have a lot of rituals and superstitions," said the 27-year-old Norwegian who spent a year with Besiktas, the city's "third" team.

"I was shocked when I was first introduced to the fans because they brought out a sheep, cut its head off and then smeared the blood over my forehead."

"There are always a lot of guns about the place and it can be truly intimidating. The atmosphere in Fenerbahce's ground will be just like Galatasaray — but it's not half as bad as Trabzonspor."

That's really fierce. "They take the game seriously, it's the only thing they care about and they don't like losing."

"But the Turks really do love good football, they can be good company and I enjoyed it out here for a year. Sometimes you don't realise that they do things a bit tongue in cheek."

But England defender Gary Pallister still does not know whether his last welcome to Istanbul was a joke — or a warning.

"It was a cracker. I was a few yards behind the rest of the squad going into the hotel and I caught the eye of one of the porters inside the lobby."

"I nodded at him as if to say 'alright' and he just drew his finger across his throat. I thought, 'oh no, they've even infiltrated the hotel.'"

United's ill-starred history with the Turks is well-documented from 1993 and goalkeeper Peter Schmeichel's clash with a young



Youri Mulder of Germany's Schalke 04 (L) and Istanbul's Osman Oezkoeylu duel for the ball during their second round UEFA Cup match, October 15 (Reuters photo)

Kurdish protester at Old Trafford, to the police baton assault on Eric Cantona and Bryan Robson and deportation of 143 United fans.

But when United returned the following year there was just plenty of noisy posturing but no trouble and United Manager Alex Ferguson insisted: "We'll have no problems this time."

That was borne out by their trouble-free arrival last night: no hordes of screaming fans and banners of hate, just polite baggage handlers and star-struck media.

But it will be loud, energetic and colourful in the Fenerbahce stadium, with flares, drums and riot police combining for an exotic atmosphere in this city where east meets west.

Pallister, United's big doubt with a recurrence of his back problem, said: "There is one of two ways to react."

"You either let it intimidate you or you can laugh at it like we did last time. They are just trying to intimidate you, put you off your game."

"I think Peter Schmeichel had upset them in the first game, stoked up the fires a bit."

"It was a unique experience, it took everyone by

surprise. But once you get on the pitch you have to forget about all of that."

"We are expecting the same this time. The experience of playing there twice will stand us in good stead."

Pallister will be given all the rest he needs and Ferguson promised: "We have to be careful because we had trouble with his back last year and we don't want to exacerbate it."

"But you want all your experienced players for this one because they are a good side and will fancy themselves at home."

United, who also have doubts over Paul Scholes and Jordi Cruyff, know that a third 0-0 or better will keep them on track to reach the lucrative later knock-out stages and confound the cynics who wrote them off after their opening defeat to Juventus in Turin.

"People made a lot out of the fact that we didn't qualify against the Turks the first time (going out on the away goal rule after a 3-3 Old Trafford result)."

"But the second game was a good result for us and we thrashed them in the return at Old Trafford. We've got enough material to go and get another good result this time."

Top seed Ivanisevic cruises to 1st round win

OSTRAVA, Czech Republic (R) — Top Seed Goran Ivanisevic cruised to a 7-6 6-4 win over Romania's Adrian Panait in the first round of the Czech Indoor Open on Monday.

In the only other match involving a seeded player on the opening day, Britain's Tim Henman overpowered Sweden's Nicklas Kulti 7-6 6-4.

Both players took advantage of the fast carpet court, blasting service winner after service winner to demoralise their opponents.

Ivanisevic, ranked fifth in the world, started slowly against world number 42 Voinea, before pulling away in the middle of the tie break and never looked back.

Ivanisevic is scheduled to play the winner of the match between Czech Petr Korda and Ecuador's Nicolas Lapentti and could also have to get past third seed Boris Becker and eighth seeded Czech Bohdan Ulihrach if he is to reach Sunday's final.

Muster describes Davis Cup report as nonsense

HONG KONG (AFP) — Austrian Thomas Muster said on Tuesday he would stop playing Davis Cup if the International Tennis Federation (ITF) did nothing to control unruly crowds.

Describing as "nonsense" the referee's report from last month's controversial tie between hosts Brazil and Austria, the world number three said he would be willing to quit Davis Cup tennis.

Muster walked off the court in protest during a doubles match against the Brazilians after claiming some local fans spat, abused him and threw missiles at him.

Brazil were awarded the tie and Muster was fined eight thousand dollars by a Davis Cup panel.

"If we continue to support countries whose crowds behave like this, sooner or later somebody is going to get injured," said Muster, in Hong Kong for the invitational tennis tournament that started on Tuesday.

"But it's not going to be me because I would not be interested in playing Davis Cup again."

The Davis Cup panel decided after an investigation that security arrangements in Brazil were adequate.

Muster is due to face South Africa's Neville Godwin, who was Boris Becker's opponent at Wimbledon when the German suffered his wrist injury this year, in his opening group match of the \$700,000 tournament Wednesday.

He said that, at the moment, he was willing to play for Austria in next year's Davis Cup tournament.

The first day's play also threw up the first upset with world number four and French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov losing 4-6, 6-4, 4-6 to Australia's Patrick Rafter in a red group match.

Kafelnikov only arrived in Hong Kong less than 12 hours before the match started after a long flight from Europe.

Godwin's hopes of qualifying for the semi-finals rests with his match against Muster after he was beaten 6-2, 6-3 by Sweden's Jonas Bjorkman in the gold group.

The winners of each of the four three-man groups, advance to the semi-finals.

Zimbabwe's Byron Black made a positive start to the tournament with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over his doubles partner, Grant Connell, of Canada.

Top seed Pete Sampras, the U.S. Open champion, faces Connell in his opening silver group match on Wednesday as he attempts to win here for the second successive year.



Atlanta Braves outfielder Marquis Grissom slides safely into third base as the ball gets away from St. Louis Cardinals Gary Gaetti (L) in the third inning of game five of the National League championship series at Busch Stadium. Atlanta defeated St. Louis 14-0 (Reuters photo)

Braves clobber Cardinals 14-0

ST. LOUIS (R) — The Atlanta Braves fought off elimination with a vengeance Monday, clobbering the St. Louis Cardinals 14-0 Monday to cut the Cards' lead to 3-2 in the best-of-seven games National League championship series.

Chipper Jones and Jeff Blauser drove in two runs each in a five-run first inning, and John Smoltz won his third post-season game.

The outburst in the first inning "was a good feeling," said Braves' second baseman Mark Lemke, who had four hits in the game. "We wanted to come out and get the crowd out of the game and we did."

The defending World Series champion Braves wasted no time serving notice they will not go quietly. It took them four batters to score three runs and two innings to open a 7-0 lead.

"Everything happened so fast the game was even frustrating," said Cardinals' third baseman Gary Gaetti. "I don't think it mattered what we did. They just kicked our

butts. Although the Cardinals still lead the series, they must win in Atlanta to face the New York Yankees in the World Series, which begin Saturday."

The Braves have won eight of their last nine post-season games at home.

"Now that we're going back on our turf, maybe the pressure will switch over to them," said the Braves' Ryan Klesko. "Our natural ability finally came through. We really cut loose tonight. It wasn't just one guy. It was everybody."

St. Louis is the only team in Major League history to twice blow a 3-1 lead in the post-season. The Cardinals did it in the 1968 world series against Detroit and the 1985 world series against Kansas City. No National League team has ever rallied from a 3-1 deficit in the NLCS.

Jones had two hits and three RBI. Marquis Grissom had three hits and scored twice, and Javy Lopez and Mark Lemke both tied the NLCS record with four hits.

TODAY AT

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA

Emilio Estevez
& Dennis Leary ... in
JUDGEMENT NIGHT

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699236
PLAZA

The Arab Cinema Surprise
Ahmad Zakiin
NASER 56
(Arabic)

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:45, 11:00

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
Demi Moore
& Gary Oldman ... in
THE SCARLET LETTER
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
FRENCH KISS at 6:30 p.m
HEAT at 3:30 & 8:45 p.m

Amoun Theatre & Cinema TEL: 618274 - 618275

Today presents Zawad Weld Awad
theatre group in the play entitled
Five-Star Government
Starring comedians:
Mahmoud Saimah
& Hussein Tubishat
Play starts 8:30 p.m.

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre TEL: 625155

PRESENTS
THE SATIRICAL COMEDY
Arab Human Rights
At 8:30 p.m.
For reservation please call
625155 - 640155

Tennis federation aims at creating broad base for game in Kingdom

By Roufan Nahhas
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — President of the Jordan Tennis Federation (JTF) Abdullah Khalil Monday announced his federation's new plan for the coming four years and said the JTF aims at creating a broad base for the game of tennis in Jordan.

"Our goal is to give all tennis players all the support they need," Mr. Khalil said.

At a press conference, Mr. Khalil said that JTF plans to make tennis a more popular game in the Kingdom.

"We are planning to make tennis more popular by holding more championships on the local scene while taking part in championships abroad," he added.

Mr. Khalil said that JTF was working towards a wider approach in the south especially Aqaba city.

He added that "talks were underway to hire a coach from abroad to train national teams."

The JTF president said his federation hoped to find new, promising players in the upcoming championship which starts on Oct. 17.

The Jordan Open Tennis Tournament sponsored by AC Delco, has brought together 70 players in the men's singles tournament and 25 ladies in the ladies singles.

It is by this tournament that the JTF hopes new champions will be spotted who may someday successfully represent Jordan on the international level.

Like every sports federation in Jordan, what the JTF mainly lacks is financial support.

"We highly appreciate AC Delco for sponsoring the tournament and hope to find more companies who will help us," Mr. Khalil said.

Mr. Khalil pointed out that JTF would be looking towards achieving results.

"We will do our utmost to get positive results and nothing else," he noted.

Courageous Sunderland share points

LONDON (AFP) — Sunderland, reduced to ten men after Richard Ord was shown the red card early in the second-half, staged a courageous fight-back to earn a 2-2 draw against Middlesbrough in the wear-tees Derby at Roker Park Monday night.

Fabrizio Ravaneli scored his eleventh goal of the season to put Boro into a 2-1 lead eight minutes after the interval, and the odds on Sunderland slaving a share of the points looked slim when Ord was sent off five minutes later for stamping on Nick Barmby.

The home side kept fighting, however, and they were rewarded when substitute Craig Russell scored a 61st-minute equaliser.

Brazilian Emerson had given Boro an 18th-minute lead with a spectacular 25-yard shot and Alex Rae had equalised from the penalty spot four minutes later after Phil Whelan fouled Paul Stewart.

Sunderland have now had three players sent off in their last two games.

Martin Scott and Paul Stewart were ordered off in the last game at Arsenal.

Boro boss Bryan Robson welcomed skipper Nigel Pearson back from a knee injury and, with Steve Vickers and Robbie Mustoe fit again after toe and shoulder injuries, the Teessiders were at full strength.

Formula One rattled by Indy intruder Villeneuve

SUZUKA (AFP) — Jacques Villeneuve may have lost his battle with Damon Hill at the Japanese Grand Prix but the daring French-Canadian driver is set to make a longstanding impact on Formula One.

A rear wheel flew off Villeneuve's car during Sunday's race ending his challenge for the drivers' title, which went to race winner Hill at the season closing race.

But having won the title, Hill is now yesterday's man and 25-year-old Villeneuve is the Williams-Renault driver of the future.

Hill has been dumped by Williams while Villeneuve, the 1995 IndyCar champion, will be staying. But even the British champion, who has moved to TWR Arrows under something of a shadow, admits Villeneuve has a bright future ahead.

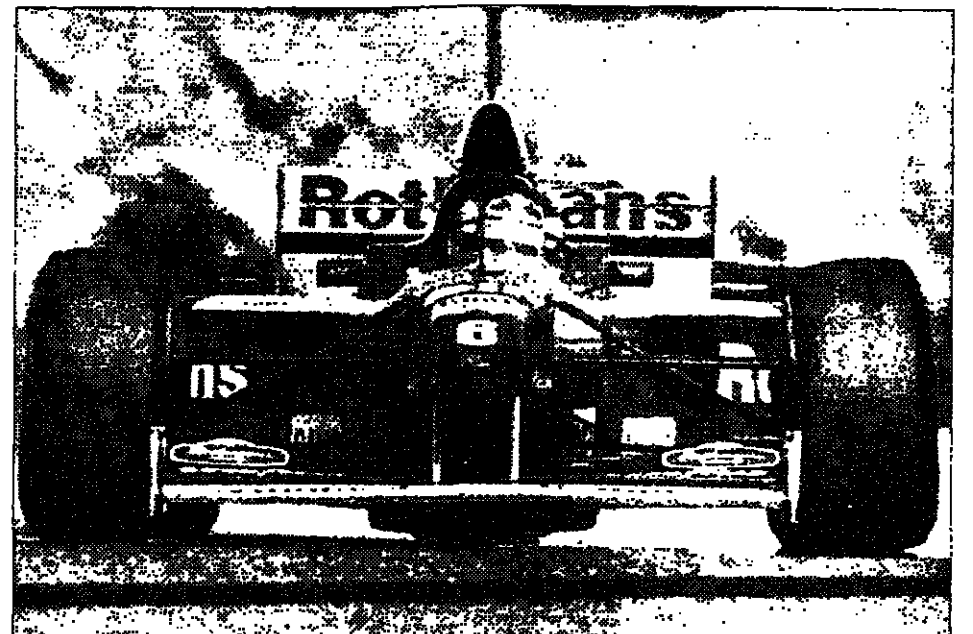
"Jacques has been absolutely an outstanding newcomer to the championship," said Hill. "I'm certain that Jacques is a future world champion."

Villeneuve has insisted on his own way of setting up his car and aggressively duelled with other drivers in a style learned on the high-speed oval tracks of U.S. IndyCar racing.

He won four Grands Prix, a record for an F1 rookie, and produced many thrilling moments.

Villeneuve made a sparkling F1 debut by clinching pole position and leading Hill until five laps to go in the Australian Grand Prix won by Hill.

He won his first race at the Nurburgring in April when he beat 1994 and



Jacques Villeneuve

1995 world champion and Ferrari ace Michael Schumacher of Germany at the European Grand Prix.

The Canadian anthem was played for the first time since his late father, Gilles Villeneuve, won in Spain in 1981 in a Ferrari.

At the Portuguese Grand Prix in September, Villeneuve junior passed Schumacher in a heart-stopping move on the outside of the final bend as they jostled to pass a backmarker.

Helped by what fans fondly call an "indy pass", the Canadian won the penultimate race and narrowed Hill's rankings lead to nine points.

But everything went wrong on the twisty figure-eight Suzuka track. He made a bad start and though he fought back into contention swerved off after his wheel on the 37th

lap.

He said: "I am happy because when I came to F1 everyone was telling me you couldn't overtake and F1 wasn't fun. It is not true. I have had fun this year and learnt a lot."

Villeneuve is determined to assert his own ideas for the high-tech Williams car.

He wanted a different suspension strength on the left and right of the car so he could step up the throttle while braking.

Villeneuve's car has a hand clutch and two pedals, while Hill had three pedals and a left-foot clutch. That enabled Villeneuve to make an explosive start to races.

"The car was getting better each race," said Villeneuve who drove some 10,000 kilometers in pre-season practice, despite his dislike for testing. "The season has been very posi-

tive we have been able to fight all season until the last race."

His driving has been called rather conservative when compared with the passionate style of his father who died in a crash during practice at the Belgian Grand Prix in 1982.

Villeneuve senior stunned fans by sliding his car into chicanes and testing the grip of his car to the limit.

His son is certain to make up for the poor F1 record of other IndyCar converts such as Michael Andretti.

And, he could well become world champion in fewer years than those required for other superstars. Michael Schumacher needed four years after his F1 debut to clinch the title and late Brazilian legend Ayrton Senna took five.

Coventry cash for big Ron

LONDON (AFP) — Coventry manager Ron Atkinson has been told more money is available to strengthen the side in the battle to move out of the Premiership relegation zone.

Atkinson has already spent 18 million pounds since taking over at Highfield Road 20 months ago but chairman Bryan Richardson has given the go ahead for him to move back into the transfer market.

Richardson is aware of the potential financial losses which would run into millions of pounds if city were to be relegated and then failed to regain their top flight status at the first attempt.

Richardson said: "We are under no financial pressure and if we have to invest more money into the team, then there is no problem."

"It's not a question of, 'we've spent all we can and now we've got to make the best of it.' If we think we can improve the squad again — which I'm sure we can — then we will do it."

"If Ron wants to buy someone else, the money is available. You can't be fairer than that."

However, Richardson does have faith in the current squad assembled by Atkinson in terms of climbing the table.

He said: "I think we are playing well and I think we must have done something wrong like kicking the cat because we are having no luck at the moment."

"I am happy with the way the team is performing and can't fault the commitment and effort. We just need to get a goal in the first few minutes of a game and that will settle things down and then everyone relaxes and can play."

Vogts hopes to have Crocodile ready for Irish

KARLSRUHE (AFP) — Berti Vogts hopes to line up South African-born Sean "Crocodile" Dundee against Northern Ireland in a World Cup qualifying match in November.

The German national coach talked Dundee out of accepting an international call-up for South Africa last December and has since been keeping his shoulder against the administrative door to hurry through his naturalisation forms.

Dundee, 23, scored 16 goals for Karlsruhe last season after joining them from third division Ditzingen for 250,000 marks (\$165,000).

The boy from Bayview Durban, who has lived in Germany for four years, is the Bundesliga's leading scorer this season with nine in 10 league games, plus four in the cup and Europe.

Karlsruhe captain Thomas Hassler is full of praise.

"He's like a grenade with the clip off. He'll be playing for Germany soon," said the international midfielder.

Vogts, who coached Germany to the European Championship, said he had been promoting Dundee's

case since the beginning of the year.

He had asked the German government to speed it up in May so he could have played in Euro '96, but the government refused.

"I hope that his naturalisation will be dealt with swiftly as I am keeping the door open so I can name him in the squad for the match with Northern Ireland in November," Vogts said.

Franz Beckenbauer, the first man to play and manage a World Cup-winning side, has no doubts about Dundee.

"He might not have been known before but he's a must for any club now," said Germany's former coach who is now president of Bayern Munich.

Karlsruhe coach Winfried Schaefer hopes to have put off the postchess talking Dundee into signing a new contract keeping him at Karlsruhe till 2003.

"He's a phenomenal scorer," Schaefer said.

German national captain Jurgen Klinsmann agreed.

"He'd be welcomed into the side with open arms," said the Bayern Munich star.

Davis Cup hero Steeb to retire

MUNICH (AFP) — Carl-Uwe Steeb who became a national hero in 1988 when he defeated Sweden's world number one Mats Wilander to give Germany its first ever Davis Cup title announced Tuesday he is to retire.

Steeb, 29 and winner of three singles titles, has suffered from a series of injuries which has led to him falling to 95 in the rankings after reaching a high of 14 in January 1990.

His victory over Wilander

though will rank as his finest achievement, coming from two sets down and a fanatical home Swedish crowd to win 8-10, 1-6, 6-2, 6-4, 8-6 in Gothenburg.

Steeb, who has won over \$2.3 million in prize money, will take his bow at the Stuttgart indoor tournament next week after the organiser Ion Tiriac, formerly Boris Becker's mentor, arranged a wild card entry for him.

Asia-Pacific could get top club tournament

SYDNEY (R) — The leading clubs of Asia, Oceania and the United States could compete in a new club championship from 1997, an Australian newspaper said Tuesday.

The Sydney Morning Herald said plans for an annual eight-team competition had been backed by Peter Velappan, the powerful general secretary of the Asian Football Confederation.

"We have now in principle accepted the organisation of the tournament in 1997," Velappan was quoted as saying.

The Asian Pacific Cup would initially feature the Australian club champions and runners-up, the New Zealand champions, U.S. Major League soccer championship game winners and the four Asian club champions tournament semifinalists, the Herald said.

"For a long time in Asia, at least, we have tended to concentrate on national teams and now clubs should take over the prominent role in development and we are giving them more opportunity to play teams from other continents," Velappan said.

Sydney, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur head a list of possible host cities for the inaugural tournament in February or July next year, with the clubs sharing a \$5 million (U.S. \$3.9 million) prize money, the Herald said.

The proposed tournament would be underwritten by an Australian consortium

which intends to sell broadcast rights to pay television.

Oceania Football Confederation general secretary Josephine King said her organisation, whose members include Australia, New Zealand and South Pacific Nations, supported the concept.

"We are putting it to a meeting of member countries on October 19 but we think there will be absolutely no problem. Asia have agreed, we're happy — it's good for Oceania," King told the Herald.

Soccer Australia, which has yet to support the proposal, said it intended to gather more information.

Van Gobel to leave Galatasaray

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Dutch international defender Ulrich Van Gobel is to leave Turkish Cup winners Galatasaray it was announced Tuesday.

"We have terminated his contract and he will return to the Netherlands Wednesday," a Galatasaray spokesman said.

Van Gobel, 25, was originally in the squad to play Cup Winners Cup holders Paris Saint Germain Thursday, but Galatasaray have signed two Romanians Adrian Ilie and Sebastian Filipescu from Steaua Bucharest — who join their international captain George Hagi.

Turkish football authorities stipulate that there can only be three foreign players playing in a team.

According to the Turkish press Van Gobel, formerly at Feyenoord, is likely to join English Premiership side Southampton, whose manager Graeme Souness left Galatasaray at the end of last season.

Souness coached the 10 time League champions, to their 1996 Cup success against arch rivals and champions Feyenoord, but a new board wanted to instal the Turkish national coach Fatih Terim and Souness was let go.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

WELL READ:

Both vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♠ 3

♥ Q 10 8 6

♦ A 10 3

♣ Q 8 4 2

EAST

♠ 10 6 4

♥ A 7 5 3

♦ K Q 4

♣ K 7 6

SOUTH

♠ A K Q J 8 7

♥ 9

♦ 9 5 2

♣ A 3

The bidding:

SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST

1♠ Pass 1NT Pass

4♠ Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

Running a long suit to force a player to come down to a particular holding is an effective tactic. However, sometimes you will still have to guess the end position, especially if the defenders are adept at ducking.

Note North's decision to respond one no trump rather than two clubs. The singleton in partner's suit is a liability, and no value should be assigned to it for purposes of responding. As the cards lie, three no trump is unbeatable. But we can't blame South, looking at a solid seven-card suit including 100 honors, for selecting the suit game rather than no trump as the final contract.

West led the king of hearts and East showed an odd number by following with the lowest card available. At trick two West shifted to the right of diamonds, and declarer made a good play by ducking in dummy and allowing East to win the jack. The continuation of the king was taken by the ace, whereafter South ran seven spades, reducing everybody to three cards. East discarded two hearts and two clubs while West parted with four hearts and a diamond.

Declarer had already lost two tricks, and was in danger of still having to concede a trick in each minor. Only an endplay or dropping the singleton king of clubs would save the day. Since East was known from the play to hold the queen of diamonds, the defender would have to have the king of clubs as well for the endplay to work.

But what was East's last card? There was no way for South to know whether it was a club or a diamond. South mentally tossed a coin, then cashed the ace of clubs. When the king came tumbling down, the game rolled home.

FOR RENT

Three furnished apartments of 3 bedrooms each. Two unfurnished apartments of 3 bedrooms each. C.H. & telephones. Location: Shmeisani, near Birds Garden. Tel: 642351 - 667862

VACANCY FOR TRANSLATOR/CLERK

A foreign establishment is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of TRANSLATOR/CLERK.

Required qualifications:

- 1) Excellent ability in Arabic-English and English-Arabic translation.
- 2) Excellent command of type writing in English and Arabic.
- 3) A minimum of 5-year experience in translator / clerk work.

Please send curriculum vitae and your telephone number to:

P.O.Box 2835 - Amman 11181 (Attention to IQ) Not later than November 15, 1996

FOR RENT

Fully furnished penthouse deluxe roof with open terraces overlooking Amman. 3 bedrooms (one master), 3 bathrooms, large salons, modern kitchen, with central heating, telephone, lift, satellite, parking, fireplace.

Please call: 678501 after 2:00 p.m.



Gifts Centre Introduces

CHAMPS-ELYSEES from GUERLAIN

THE GIFTS CENTRE represented by Ibrahim & Khalid Abu Shaqra Trading Co., one of the leading companies in this field, introduced to the Jordanian market a new fragrance from GUERLAIN.

On this occasion a press conference was held at Gifts Centre - Abdoun in which Mr. Mohammed Sulawani the General Manager of Gifts Centre presented the new fragrance CHAMPS-ELYSEES from GUERLAIN.

The "world's most beautiful avenue" (as it is often called) provides the setting and name for Guerlain's new perfume. Aimed at young, elegant women who display a certain insolence towards life, the fragrance is presented in a bottle designed by Robert Granel, with a bright pink of the fragrance, and the result is a lyrical ballad down the Champs-Elysees to the tune of Francois Truffaut's Jules et Jim.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Ministry of Water & Irrigation Jordan Valley Authority

Invitation of Tender - No. 11/96 For The Water Management Information System

1. The Jordan Valley Authority of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan from the Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KfW) for the upgrading of the water management information system (WMIS) and the full automation of the King Abdullah Canal.
2. The Jordan Valley Authority now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and installation of computers, and the migration and operation of the (WMIS) software.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Jordan Valley Authority.

P.O. Box : 2269
Telephone : 962-6-689400
Fax : 962-6-689916

4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by any eligible bidder from the Tenders Directorate of JVA against a payment of a non-refundable fee of JD100.
5. Time Schedule:
 - Purchase of Tender documents start as of Thursday morning Oct. 17, 1996 until 3 O'clock p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 29, 1996.
 - Site visit will be made on Wednesday Oct. 30, 1996.
 - Tenders accompanied by a bid security of JD equivalent to 5 per cent of the Bid Price should be submitted to the secretary of Tenders Committee of the JVA not later than 12 noon local time Wednesday, Nov. 20, 1996 at the first floor of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation/Shmeisani.

Secretary General
Jordan Valley Authority
Dr. Dureid Mahasneh

PRESENTS
SATIRICAL COMEDY
Human Rights
Reservation please
25155 - 640155

Lull on Afghan front as rival factions regroup

KABUL (Agencies) — A relative calm prevailed on the battlefronts between forces of the Taliban militia and of the ousted government as both sides mobilised forces and planned strategy in what could be a decisive battle for the capital, Kabul.

Pakistan is set to become the first country to recognise the new Taliban administration in Kabul, a top Taliban official said. Senior commanders of former Afghan Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud and Uzbek warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum met to coordinate their strategy against the Taliban.

The commanders — Abdul Bhir Salanghi for Mr. Massoud and General Abdul Majid Ruzi for Gen. Dostum — met on a blanket laid alongside the road outside Jalal-ud-Din, 90 kilometres north of Taliban-occupied Kabul, under the watchful eyes of bodyguards.

Just a few hours earlier an unknown aircraft, presumably flying in support of the Taliban, had dropped two bombs, missing the town less than a kilometre away and hitting a nearby mountain.

Pakistan's Interior Minister Nasrullah Babar, often accused of heavily supporting the Taliban, was in Kabul on Tuesday.

Mr. Babar also travelled to northern Mazar-e-Sharif to meet Gen. Dostum, believed to be the only other

major force left in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan's deposed government has accused Pakistan of backing the Taliban with money, weapons and military training, a charge Islamabad has denied.

There were no public statements following the meetings.

Gen. Dostum, an ethnic Uzbek, is trying to convene an all-party summit in northern Afghanistan, but so far the Taliban has refused to attend.

In Kabul the hardline Taliban rulers were preventing residents and reporters from travelling north of the capital, where they battled guerrilla-style attacks with heavy machineguns and rocket launchers.

"Our forces are orderly and positioned in defensive positions," said Taliban Information Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi. "We can defend against any attack by the enemy."

The few travellers who walked into Kabul from villages to the north said there was fighting on the northern road, but the Taliban still controlled the important military air base at Baghram, about 50 kilometres away.

Since being routed from Kabul by invading Taliban soldiers, troops loyal to Mr. Massoud have been waging an effective guerrilla-type war north of the capital.

They have been hitting

Taliban soldiers simultaneously at several places along the northern road, cutting their defence lines and trapping hundreds of Taliban soldiers, say travellers arriving in the capital. Most of the new arrivals in Kabul arrive by foot, many of them walking for hours to reach the city.

In Pakistan, a Taliban spokesman said reinforcements were being sent to the Afghan capital from elsewhere in Afghanistan.

Mullah Eid Mohammed Wahadyar said 4,000 Taliban fighters from throughout the country would arrive in the capital in the next two days when a counter attack would be launched against former government soldiers.

Amir Ali, who operates a rickety wooden tea house in north Kabul, said Taliban soldiers have been moving heavy equipment and soldiers to the frontline.

"What is left in Afghanistan except death and bombs and killing," he said. "We have nothing left. Even God has forgotten us."

On Monday in northern Afghanistan, Gen. Dostum recognised the government of President Burhannudin Rabbani, but Mr. Muttaqi said it's a mistake.

"The alliance between Rabbani and Dostum will not solve our problems," said Mr. Muttaqi. "They are the enemies of our nation..."

(Continued on page 7)



Aides help Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat fix his headress which flew off as His Majesty King Hussein's helicopter took off from Jericho after the King's visit to the Palestinian self-rule town on Tuesday (photo by Youssef Allan)

Gulf war committee says hopes for funds set back

GENEVA (R) — The U.N. reparations fund for the Gulf war will have approved roughly \$7 billion in awards to claimants by the end of 1996, but lacks funds to make payments to victims before then, its executive secretary said on Tuesday.

Carlos Alzamora, executive secretary of the United Nations Compensation Commission, blamed the latest funding crisis on the delay in implementing the oil-for-food accord with Iraq.

But he expected the elusive deal to go ahead in December.

"I presume maybe sometime in December. That has been the forecast," he told reporters, making clear it was a U.N. timetable.

Mr. Alzamora said he was trying to avoid the cash-strapped commission running out of cash next April, possibly through a bridging loan from major Western donor countries.

Mr. Alzamora, a 70-year-old former Peruvian diplomat, also told reporters that he was retiring by year-end.

Asked whether the fund would be able to pay out awards to claimants this

(Continued on page 7)

Town votes for dope in N. Zealand polls

WELLINGTON (R) — Residents of a tiny New Zealand town clearly want legal highs, analysis of voting in last week's election revealed Tuesday.

The old coal town of Millerton on the west coast of the South Island was the sole polling station to deliver a clear victory for New Zealand's Legalise Cannabis Party in Saturday's election. Of the 31 votes cast, Legalise Cannabis got 14. The leftist alliance came second with nine. But, the ruling conservative National Party, which won most seats and 34 per cent of the national vote, failed to notch a single vote.

"The Legalise Cannabis Party probably wouldn't do much for Millerton, but neither would anybody else, the town's 'unofficial' Mayor Tony Aldridge told Radio New Zealand. And Millerton may provide help with the inconclusive election result. If politicians came to Millerton, they would be more relaxed and squabble less, Mr. Aldridge said. Countrywide, the Cannabis Party took 1.42 per cent of the vote, missing out on any seats in the new parliament. Millerton has about 80 residents and was a stronghold for the left-wing Labour Party until the mines closed. The town has no pub, and about half its population is out of work.

Texas jury awards \$5.5m in TV libel suit

HOUSTON — A Texas jury awarded an unsuccessful Houston mayoral candidate \$5.5 million in damages for a 1991 television report that he blamed for his election loss. The jury found that a report by KTRK-TV in Houston had defamed Sylvester Turner, now a member of the Texas legislature, when it linked him to an alleged 1986 insurance scam in which a former client had faked his own death. The story came out shortly before a hotly contested mayoral race that Mr. Turner lost to Mayor Bob Lanier. Mr. Turner said the report was untrue and that it turned a tide that had been running in his favour. The jury, which deliberated for a week after listening to a month of testimony, said reporter Wayne Dolcino must pay \$500,000 of the \$5.5 million in damages, with the station responsible for the rest.

Colombia to shame bad drivers

BOGOTA (R) — Under a new programme to improve traffic safety in downtown Bogota, media commercials will categorise bad drivers as different barnyard animals, Colombia's leading daily El Tiempo reported Sunday. The TV and radio spots, sponsored by the Transit and Transport Ministry and beginning Thursday, classify the classic road hog as a driver who ignores all traffic signs and goes the wrong way down one-way streets. Donkeys are typified as motorists with little sense of direction, who stop in the middle of the highway to find their way and are subject to violent outbursts if pulled over for a traffic violation. The title of cow is reserved mostly for the capital's kamikaze bus drivers who follow fixed routes but have no specific stopping points, leading them to weave in and out of other vehicles in search of passengers like their farm counterparts looking for a patch of grass. The strike campaign shows the nightmare of motoring on the Colombian capital streets, besieged by rousing traffic-jams would-be race car drivers and combines committed with the appropriate noises to shame motorists into being more considerate.

Peres says Netanyahu doomed to fail to achieve peace with Arabs

PARIS (AFP) — Israeli former Prime Minister Shimon Peres said in an interview published here Tuesday that his right wing successor was engaged in a policy which had "no chance" of succeeding.

Mr. Peres told the conservative daily Le Figaro that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government "is engaged in a policy which is wrong and has not the slightest chance of succeeding."

He said Mr. Netanyahu had made "several basic mistakes."

"Firstly, the idea that we can have peace for nothing; I know from experience that you never get anything for nothing."

"Likewise, the theory that we can have security before peace; in my opinion, the opposite is true. Only peace can bring security. It is absurd to demand one without offering the other," Mr. Peres who recently

met Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, criticised Mr. Netanyahu for believing that a "permanent solution for the Palestinian territories" was a form of "generous autonomy."

"Autonomy is a stage not a lasting solution. I don't believe the Palestinians see the accord we concluded as an act of generosity," Mr. Peres told the paper.

Asked what role France might play in the negotiations between Israelis and Palestinians, he said that "even if it offers no immediate interest, its presence is welcome." But he added: "The negotiations are a one-to-one affair and there is no point in having third parties there to twist your arm."

Israelis pessimistic

Last month's violence on the west bank and Gaza Strip has left Israelis increasingly pessimistic

about the prospects for peace, according to an opinion poll released Tuesday.

Only 31 per cent of the 500 Israelis polled by Tel Aviv University said they believed in the likelihood of achieving peace with the Arabs while 47 per cent said it was unlikely and 22 per cent were undecided.

In August, prior to the bloody clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, 45 per cent of those polled said achieving peace was possible while 34 per cent said it was unlikely.

In the latest survey, 41 per cent of those polled said the Oslo autonomy accords with the Palestinians would not lead to peace while 34 per cent disagreed. The remainder did not express an opinion.

The poll, with a margin of error of four per cent, was conducted in early October, soon after the Israeli-Palestinian clashes.

Russia to make new proposals to promote peace talks

CAIRO (AFP) — Russia Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov will put forward new ideas to spur on the Middle East peace process when he visits the region later this month, a Russian envoy said Tuesday.

Mr. Primakov "will bring new ideas and proposals to promote the peace process," said his deputy Victor Posuvalyuk during a stopover in Cairo on his way to Saudi Arabia.

"The ideas and proposals he will discuss will be anything but routine or hackneyed, especially since the minister has a deep understanding" and knowledge of the region, Mr. Posuvalyuk said.

Mr. Primakov was Cairo correspondent for Pravda newspaper in the 1970s before becoming president of the Russian institute for oriental studies.

The foreign minister will arrive in Cairo on Oct. 30 as part of his week-long tour, which will also take him to Israel, the Gaza Strip, Syria and Lebanon.

Russia and the United States are the joint sponsors of the Middle East peace process which was launched at the Madrid peace conference in 1991.

However, Moscow has taken a back seat to Washington and was not represented at an emergency summit in the U.S. capital on October 1 and 2 called to salvage the peace process after unprecedented Israeli-Palestinian clashes.

Mr. Primakov recently called for the resumption of Arab-Israeli negotiations on the basis of land-for-peace, which Israel's right-wing government has rejected.

French President Jacques Chirac is also to launch a six-day tour of the Middle East on Saturday.

Mr. Posuvalyuk said that in Saudi Arabia he would have discussions with Saudi officials on what he called important regional issues. He again gave no details.

Israel rules out role for France as a mediator in peace process

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel on Tuesday ruled out a French role as a go-between in its troubled peace negotiations with the Palestinians, ahead of a regional tour by French President Jacques Chirac.

"The United States has demonstrated its effectiveness in all Arab-Israeli negotiations. The participation of another partner would only complicate things," an Israeli official said, asking not to be named.

French envoy Bertrand Dufourcq visited Israel on Monday as part of a regional tour aimed at helping the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and preparing for Mr. Chirac's Oct. 19-25 visit to the Middle East.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy told Mr. Dufourcq that "the two parties must be left alone to negotiate and there is no

need to come along with more suggestions," newspapers here reported.

"It would be a shame if a third party intervened in the negotiations as that can only do harm," Mr. Levy said.

Mr. Dufourcq also met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross, who is acting as mediator in the Israeli-Palestinian talks, on Monday.

Tuesday, the French foreign ministry secretary general was to travel to the West Bank to meet Palestinian president Yasser Arafat.

Mr. Dufourcq said in Egypt on Sunday that France was willing to make "suggestions" if Israeli-Palestinian negotiations stall.

But Israeli newspapers and officials on Tuesday accused France of being biased

toward the Palestinians.

The daily Haaretz said Mr. Chirac had refused to address the Israeli parliament and the French embassy had organised a reception for the Palestinians but not Israelis during his stay.

"This is a bad sign," the Israeli official said. Mr. Chirac appears to have decided to "relaunch what Paris calls France's Arab policy at the expense of its relations with Israel," he said.

Mr. Chirac is to visit Syria, Israel, the Gaza Strip, Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt during his Middle East tour.

Israel has already rejected European Union (EU) involvement in the peace talks, after the EU announced it would appoint a Middle East envoy so it could play a greater role in the peace process.

Zeroual announces Nov. 28 referendum on constitution

ALGIERS (AFP) — Algeria is to hold a referendum on amending the constitution on Nov. 28, President Liamine Zeroual announced Monday in a televised address.

Amendments to the constitution will be designed to limit the powers of the president in favour of the parliament, which will be given a second chamber to "give more stability to the institutions of the state," Mr. Zeroual said Monday.

Algerians will also be given the opportunity to vote on official recognition for the country's Berbers, who want their language and culture put on a par with Arab and Islamic traditions.

Mr. Zeroual said the referendum would also cover the creation of a council of state to "strengthen justice and administration," and the introduction of a state high court which would be given powers to try the president "should he no longer be worthy of the confidence placed in him by the people."

"I am committing myself, today, before you, to respect your sovereign decision,"

Mr. Zeroual said. "Your choice will be the substance of a move towards the revision of laws on the parties and on the electoral code, as well as legislative and local elections," he said.

Mr. Zeroual also confirmed that general elections would be held before the middle of next year, and local elections "before the end" of next year.

The president last month announced the establishment of a national commission, to be chaired by Prime Minister Ahmad Ouyahia, to organise the referendum in the strife-torn country.

The 700,000 Algerians living abroad will also be entitled to vote.

Algeria has been in the throes of a savage civil war since 1992, pitting the military-backed government against insurgents who claim to have won parliamentary elections in January of that year.

The government annulled the elections, sparking a conflict which has so far cost an estimated 50,000 lives.

In continuing violence, four people were killed and

13 others were injured in two separate incidents, security services said.

They said three people were killed overnight and 13 injured, two of them seriously, when a home-made bomb exploded in the Lakhdaria district southeast of the capital. The fourth person killed was the business manager of the Arabic language weekly Al Sharq who was shot while driving his car in the capital early Tuesday.

The security services communique said Hamoui Mokrane, 43, was gunned down by a "group of terrorists," the official term used for armed extremists who have been fighting the military-backed regime since 1992.

The Al Sharq magazine has one of the biggest circulations in the Algerian press and is aimed mainly at a female readership.

Journalists became prime targets in 1993, and 54 have since been killed, as well as another 20 or so people working as drivers or in other press-related jobs, whom the fundamentalists accused of "collaborating" with the regime.

3 Somali warlords announce ceasefire

NAIROBI (AFP) — Somalia's three leading warlords declared a ceasefire Tuesday after their first face-to-face talks in Nairobi mediated by Kenyan President Daniel Arap Moi.

Hussein Mohammed Aideed, Ali Mahdi Mohamed and Osman Hassan Ali "Ato" declared in a joint communique a "cessation of hostilities ... with immediate effect."

The statement issued by State House after the week-long talks agreed that they would allow free movement of people in Mogadishu, the divided capital.

They would also remove all roadblocks leading from one region to another, halt "media propaganda," and facilitate delivery of humanitarian aid, it said.

They pledged to continue dialogue, and urged Mr. Moi to continue his mediation.

All three warlords control part of the war-torn capital, with their territories delineated by "green lines" which only some can cross.

Mr. Aideed, 34, a former U.S. marine, took over leadership of his faction after the death in August of his father,

General Mohammed Farah Aideed, who died from wounds received in a Mogadishu battle.

Mr. Ato was General Aideed's financier, supporting him in his battles against U.S. and U.N. troops, but split with him early last year and formed his own faction.

The U.S. and U.N. troops arrived to halt looting of food, going to victimise a disaster-stricken famine and to end Somalia's clan wars.

The U.S. troops pulled out in March 1994 after American television viewers saw images of the bodies of U.S. troops being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu.

The "Blue Helmets" made an ignominious retreat a year later after a failed manhunt for General Aideed, launched after his militiamen killed 24 Pakistani peacekeepers.

Both Mr. Hussein Aideed and Mr. Ali Mahdi style themselves "interim president" of Somalia, which has been without a recognised government since the overthrow of dictator Mohamed Siad Barre in 1991 following a bloody civil war which gave way to clan fighting.

Abundance forces Egypt to divert Nile water

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt for the first time Tuesday diverted excess Nile water to the western desert from Lake Nasser, which has reached its maximum level, as part of efforts to increase irrigated land.

President Hosni Mubarak attended an official ceremony to inaugurate the Touchka Canal, 250 kilometres south of the Aswan High Dam, the Egyptian news agency MENA reported.

The canal was built in a way to enable the automatic diversion of excess waters after Lake Nasser has reached its maximum level of 178 metres, said Aswan High Dam Authority Chairman Mina Iskandar.

"That level was reached on Oct. 7 and kept rising but the water was held back by a sand dam to enable President Mubarak to attend this historic event," Mr. Iskandar told AFP.